Angels or Demons?*

Divine Messengers in Ancient Egypt

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The question of angels in Ancient Near Eastern literature is quite as problematic as an inquiry into demons. Both terms are grounded in a specific Christian theology and based on a monotheistic concept of God.[1] The 'good angel' and the 'bad demon' are part of a dualistic and ethical-religious worldview which is characteristic for Judaism, Islam and Christianity.[2] For comparative religion and the wider religious history, the two terms are merely misleading. Nevertheless, they have been used as categories for decades and via Christian adoption have become part of European history of science.[3] When looking for the specific meaning and relevance of supranatural or intermediate beings, scholars have become used to referring to angels or demons, often in ignorance of the specific problems of such an approach. However, the dualism of angels and demons includes a polarisation which makes sense within the context of the prevalence and professionalisation of a monotheistic religion.[4] But because of the inherent notion that it is possible to assign the 'good' and the 'bad' to respective sides, it should not be used in the study of religions.[5]

   In the following inquiry into concepts of divine messengers in Ancient Egypt it is necessary (i) to start with some systematic considerations before (ii) analysing the material itself. In conclusion (iii) there is a short summary containing the main points highlighted in this article.

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1   For the term 'plausibilisation' see Gladigow, Gottesvorstellungen 47f.
2   See Ahn, Grenzgängerkonzepte 1f.
3   Cf. the argumentation of Lang, Zwischenwesen 416f.
4   See Ahn, Grenzgängerkonzepte 9f. and also Lang, Monotheismus 154f.
5   See Ahn, Grenzgängerkonzepte 2 and for the apologetic notion of this concept Lang, Zwischenwesen 418, and Habermehl, Dämon 203.

1. Intermediate Beings in Egyptian Polytheism

Angels like demons are representatives of a dualistic worldview. Therefore in the field of comparative religion they stand for a "Eurocentrism" when theoretical concepts grounded in a monotheistic understanding of the divine (of God) are transferred to the general history of religions.[6] If we step aside from this approach of older research, the polytheistic systems and their processes of differentiation and systematisation become interesting. Burkard Gladigow has already pointed out that polytheistic religions include systematizations by distinguishing different gods by means of specific concepts of order.[7] This forms the foundation of a wordview, which could be described as "embedding" the religion.[8] Each part of life is connected with a religious aspect, is determined by religion; birth, growing up and death, war and peace, agriculture and politics – everything is subordinated to religious precepts. This is tied up with the concept that all parts of nature or the world are "filled by deities".[9] For Ancient Egypt, Jan Assmann has called this a "cosmotheistic" concept of world. By this he means that for the Egyptian religion it is not the faith in a transcendental god which is characteristic, but rather that the understanding of the divine character of the world itself is the starting point for religious speculation.[10] This includes a second aspect: the differentiation of the pantheon by main supraregional and small regionally defined gods. The crucial point is that in Egyptian religion these deities are not static, but rather part of a complex interaction. The god Amun for example can be worshipped as local god (e.g. as "Amun-Re of Hibis" or "Amun of the southern Heliopolis" ")[11] and at the same time as a supraregional deity of the whole land. In the 12th dynasty already his main title documented this, being called the king of gods: "Amun on the top of Karnak, lord of the thrones of the two lands."[12] During the New Kingdom Amun in association with the sun-god Re becomes the main deity of Egypt: He was worshipped not only in the Great Temple of Karnak but also in the

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6   For further information see Ahn, Grenzgängerkonzepte 8f.; 17f., who has shown, that this concept was used in former times by scholars of religious studies. For the term 'Eurocentrism' see Ahn, Eurozentrismen 45.

7   See Gladigow, Plenitudo deorum 3.

8   See Bremmer, Götter 3.

9   Gladigow, Plenitudo deorum 7.

10   See Assmann, Weisheit 241.

11   Leitz, Lexikon 309 and 327.

12   Otto, Amun, 243. See for the meaning of the god Koch, Geschichte 243f.

Egyptian provinces in Syria-Palestine.[13] Such combinations of gods are
typical for the religious system of Ancient Egypt. The god Ptah for ex-
ample was the god of craftsmen, and can also be associated with crea-
tion. On the other hand he was associated with Sokar, who was a god
of the dead, like Ptah-Sokar. The same can be seen in the female god-
dess Isis, which could be combined with Hathor to Isis-Hathor. The
examples show that in Egyptian religion one and the same god can
appear as a regional as well as a subordinated deity in reference to an-
other god, and also as the superior unit for another deity. In Egyptol-
ogy this connection of different gods already has been referred to as
'hyphened gods'.[14] In this context Hans Bonnet in his "Reallexikon der
ägyptischen Religionsgeschichte", which appeared in 1952, used the
rather unfortunate term "Syncretism".[15] Moreover, we should speak of
a dynamic system of religion, whereby the functions represented by
gods can change as the case arises. Therefore the concepts of god entail
"something fluid, never completed, constantly changing".[16]

Following on this, a second aspect which is crucial for the topic of
this article becomes apparent: the ambiguity of Egyptian gods. Single
gods can be associated with both positive as well as negative signifi-
cance. One prominent example is the goddess Hathor. She appears in
literary texts and in iconographic material as a cow goddess, who is
seen as wife or as mother of Horus. In the temple of Deir el-Bahri on
the western bank of Thebes a relief shows Hathor as a larger-than-life
cow, protecting the king standing under her head.[17] Due to the am-
biguous character of Egyptian gods, Hathor can appear as a goddess of
love and fertility, and at the same time as a goddess of destruction.[18] In
the mythological tale "The Destruction of Mankind"[19] it is Hathor who
was sent by the sun god Re to punish mankind. The text relates that
"Mankind plotted against him (the sun-god), while his majesty had
been growing old."[20] The crucial point of this passage is that it is not
only an example for the negative acceptation of the goddess Hathor but

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13 For the connection with Re see Koch, Geschichte 247. See for the material of Syria-
   Palestine (especially the stela of Ramsesses II from Bet-Shean) Schipper, Vermächtnis
   256.
14 See Koch, Geschichte 40.
15 Koch, Wesen 66f.
16 Hornung, Der Eine 99 (Translation: BUS).
17 See Wilkinson, Gods 140, with a picture of a statue from the 26th dynasty showing
   Hathor as a cow with the officer Psametik.
18 See Daumas, Hathor 1029.
19 In Egyptology the text is also known as "The Book of the Cow of Heaven", although
   this book contains also other texts, see Lichtheim, Literature II 197.
20 See for the translation Lichtheim, Literature II 198, and Assmann, Ägypten 139.

that it also provides an impression for the concept of divine messengers in Ancient Egypt. Hathor, basically one of the most important deities of Egyptian religion, appears as a messenger of the god Re with a purposeful function. This can be seen in one passage of the text which contains a dialogue between the sun god Re and a council of gods (V.44-48):

> "They said to his majesty:
> "Let your Eye go and smite them for you, those schemers of evil!
> No eye is more able to smite them for you.
> May it go down as Hathor!"[21]

After the other gods had given Re this advice, Hathor was sent to slay mankind. In the following the text does not explain how this happens, it refers only of the returning of the goddess (V.49-52):

> "The goddess returned after slaying mankind in the desert,
> And the majesty of this god said:
> 'Welcome in peace, Hathor, Eye who did what I came for!'"[22]

This short dialogue between the sun-god and his daughter Hathor is followed by a second sequence, which explains that Re does not want to kill all mankind. He comes up with a ploy to deceive Hathor. A beverage of red ochre beer-mash, which looks like human blood, was prepared and distributed throughout the whole land. The goddess drank and when she came back, she was drunken and had not annihilated mankind. Subsequently, the aetiology of a cult was founded, where at a special "feast of Hathor" an alcoholic bear-mash was prepared.[23]

The example of the goddess Hathor shows that the concept of divine messengers in Ancient Egypt is highly complex. It is linked with a hierarchical world of gods and the distinction between different functions. Hathor appears to Re as a subordinate deity with the single duty to annihilate mankind. The following story corresponds to this reduction in the meaning of Hathor. Once let go, Re is unable to stop Hathor, rather he has to use a ploy to protect mankind from the dangerous and wild goddess. In this plot, Hathor appears more as a terrifying animal than as an important goddess. Regarding the topic of this article the aforementioned terminological problem is striking. If we were to look only at this text, Hathor would be called a 'demon', because she is subordinate and negatively determined. But in fact she is one of the main female deities of Ancient Egypt, with a large number of different character attributes. The example shows that divine messengers are primarily functionally determined and need not be intermediate beings. In

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21   Lichtheim, Literature II 198.
22   Lichtheim, Literature II 199.
23   See Assmann, Ägypten 139, and for a further discussion von Lieven, Wein 47ff.

addition to this the example shows the systematic position of divine messengers in Egyptian religion. This position is based on a specific concept of the world. In the mythological tale of "The Destruction of Mankind" there is a fundamental distinction between a divine world and the world of man. The following third part of the myth contains the separation of heaven and earth and between deities and mankind.[24] Henceforth, mankind is on its own and fighting against each other, as the text relates.[25]

To sum up, we can conclude firstly that the received concept of divine messengers is combined with those of 'intermediate beings'.[26] It stands for deities, who communicate between the gods and man.[27] Where the distance between the main and often 'distant' deities becomes larger, these messengers become important in order to assure communication between the world of god and the world of man. From a more theoretical point of view, the main function of divine messengers seems to be to overcome both the spatial as well as the temporal 'interdependence-interruption' which occurs in the wake of increasing hierarchization of a religion.[28] According to this, divine messengers need not be subordinate deities in general, rather they are a functional concept, to be determined as the case arises. The example of the goddess Hathor merely shows that also deities at the top of the pantheon can act as divine messengers and therefore appear in a subordinate role.

2. Divine Messengers and Intermediate Beings

According to the functional determination of divine messengers and intermediate beings, it is not surprising that the Egyptian language does not have a specific hieroglyphic sign for a subordinate deity. Gods and deities are normally determined with the Netjer-sign ⌐, the falcon on a standard ⌐ or a sitting person with wig and ceremonial beard,[29] no matter whether it is the state god Amun-Re or a local and more marginal deity. In Egyptology these local and more minor deities are

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24   See Assmann, Ägypten 140.
25   Assmann, Ägypten 140.
26   See Lang, Zwischenwesen 419, and Lang, Mittelwesen 146. Ahn has used the term of 'Grenzgänger' (border crosser), see Ahn, Grenzgängerkonzepte 40f.
27   See Lang, Zwischenwesen 418f.
28   See Gladigow, Plenitudo deorum 12, and also Lang, ‚Zwischenwesen' 415, who quotes the Platonian philosopher Apuleius von Madaura.
29   See Kurth, Suum Cuique 55.

often referred to as 'demons', especially if they have negative attrib-
utes.[30] If we let this problematic term be, 'demons' seem to be subordi-
nate to deities which are part of the dynamic and fluid system of An-
cient Egyptian religion. This can be illustrated by another text which
mentioned some of the main gods and also some minor and subordi-
nate deities: the myth of the fight between the sun-god and the serpent.
This legend is based on the concept of the journey of the sun, where the
sun-god is born in the morning, grows up during the day and dies in
the evening, to be recreated during the night.[31] The nightly journey is
explained in the so called "Underworld Books". In the morning, but
also in the evening, when the sun-god is weak, he must be protected by
other divine beings.[32] In the texts these deities are given different
names, e.g. as *šm3yw*, *wpwtyw* or *ḫ3tyw*. A part of this group are also
the 77 deities of *Šdnw*. In Egyptology these 77 gods are labelled "dieu
panthée", because they consist of a number of changing aspects which
could unite to one single being.[33] One example for such a "dieu pan-
thée" is the male god Bes. He appears as a fighting deity, armed with
knifes, annihilating the enemies of the sun-god.[34] A papyrus of the late
period gives an impression of this (pBrooklyn 47.218.156, II,1-2):

> "Living reptiles (ḏdft) perish on the sight of him (= sun god), not being able
> to survive on sight of your (= Bes) great and wonderful body comprising
> nine heads on one neck.
> One has the face of a Bes.
> One has the face of a ram.
> One has the face of a falcon.
> One has the face of a crocodile.
> One has the face of a hippo.
> One has the face of a lion.
> One has the face of a bull.
> One has the face of a baboon.
> One has the face of a tom." [35]

In the myth of the sun-god these 77 gods are confronted by the 77 assis-
tants of his enemy of the sun-god, the *msw Bdšt*. In a text from the
Ramesside period these deities are associated with the god Seth:

> "If you (= the poison) are really a dog (iwiw), Baba is coming out of the
> desert with his 77 greyhounds with him … Baba is standing before him (= Ho-
> rus). He is attacking Horus and biting in his lower leg (sdḥ)."[36]

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30   Kurth, Suum Cuique 50.
31   See Quirke, Religion 35-42.
32   See Koch, Geschichte 40.
33   Leitz, Tagewählerei 244f.; with note 18 and for a critical discussion of this concept
     Quack, Pantheos 175-190.
34   For further information see Altenmüller, Bes 722, and Bonnet, Reallexikon 108f.
35   See for the translation Leitz, Tagewählerei 248f. (text 24).

The desert as the area of chaos and the main place of the god Seth is combined with the messengers, which were referred to as 77 grey-hounds. The passage also exemplifies the main duties of the divine messengers: They should kill or punish and bring disease and harm.[37] The striking point is that these messengers act clearly as subordinate deities by order of a superordinate god. Therefore the function as a messenger acting in such a way could be covered not only by inde-pendent gods like Hathor or Bes, but also by subordinate deities, who seem to be limited in their function by this duty. Another example for this concept of messengers are the ḫȝtyw-beings, which appear espe-cially in medicine-magical texts.

2.1 The ḫȝtyw-Beings

The ḫȝtyw-beings have normally been seen in Egyptology as 'demons', because of their primarily negative function and their subordinate char-acter.[38] They act as messengers of Sakhmet, who represents as a lion-faced goddess a wild and dangerous aspect.[39] Because of her function as a battlesome goddess, who stamps on the enemies by orders of the king, we can find the notion of Sakhmet as ruler of illness, pest and plague. She shoots arrows and burns up the limbs of the enemies with her scorching breath.[40] In the well-known story of Sinuhe there is one pas-sage where the fear of the king in the foreign countries is described as the "fear of Sakhmet in the year of plague."[41] In another source, a text of the 18th dynasty (New Kingdom), the task of shooting arrows is assumed by the ḫȝtyw-beings (pLeiden I 346, I, 3-5):

> "Greetings to you, ḫȝtyw-beings, henchmen of Sakhmet, who come out of the eye of Re, messengers through districts, who massacre and raise rebel-lion, who run through the land shooting arrows from their mouths."[42]

As in the myth of The Destruction of Mankind, the messengers are linked with the eye of the god Re. And moreover, in a cosmological

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36 See for the translation Leitz, Tagewählerei 248 (text 22).
37 See also Meeks, Génies 45.
38 See von Lieven, Himmel 50; Leitz, Tagewählerei 244; Westendorff, Handbuch II 743; Kaper, God 61; Firchow, Boten 90 uses the term "divine messengers".
39 Sternberg, Sachmet 324.
40 See Sternberg, Sachmet 325, and Koch, Geschichte 388f.
41 Lichtheim, Literature I 225. Nearly the same expression can be found in the Edfu inscriptions, see Kaper, God 63.
42 See for the translation Leitz, Tagewählerei 247 (text 9).

inscription of Esna-Temple the *ḫ3tyw* are armed like Sakhmet with knives and arrows.[43]

> "Greetings to you, children of Re, who appear at his bidding,
> Ennead of primitive times, when you circuit daily on his route,
> living B3.w of the gods, daily,
> when they come out of the eye of Re,
> messengers in the towns and districts
> shooting arrows from their mouths at those, whom they can see far away."

These *ḫ3.tjw*-messengers can be combined with other divine messengers.[44] A papyrus from the 18th dynasty (New Kingdom) mentioned different terms for such messengers (pEdwin Smith, XVIII, 11-15):

> "Another (spell) for the fending of the winds of bitter feeling, the ḫ3tyw, the nḏstyw, the wpwtyw of Sakhmet. Stand back ḫ3tyw! The breeze should not touch me, therefore those passing by not can pass by to rage against my face. I am Horus, who passed by the šm3yw of Sakhmet, Horus, the son of Sakhmet. I am the one, the son of Bastet, I will not die because of you". [45]

The focus of the passage is not on a general massacre in the land, but on the fate of the individual men and their welfare. The quoted text is part of a medical papyrus with a number of remedies and symbolic acts against illness.[46] It refers to the main principle of Egyptian religion, the magical worldview. The speaker puts himself on a level with Horus, the son of Sakhmet, to whom the diverse divine messengers can do no harm. Moreover, the passage displays the hierarchical structure of the divine world and the clear subordination of the *ḫ3tyw*. They can be neutralized with the support of the deities, which are more powerful.

The text is also interesting because it contains some other terms for divine messengers, like *nḏstyw*, *šm3yw* or *wpwtyw*. Especially the latter is, as Alexandra von Lieven has pointed out, a kind of a 'generic term' for the *ḫ3tyw* or *šm3yw*.[47] In pHier. BM each of these three terms is associated with another deity:

> "We will save him from the hands of the ḫ3tyw of the demons of Sakhmet, the šm3yw of Bastet, the wpwtyw of Atum, the gods (of the book)".

The main point concerning the *ḫ3tyw* is that from the beginning of Egyptian religion they have a subordinate character. They are already mentioned in the Pyramid Texts from the Old Kingdom and are associated with the god Sopdu, as spell 578 relates (Pyr 1535a-c):[48]

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43   See von Lieven, Himmel 54.
44   See Kaper, God 61, with more examples.
45   See Leitz, Tagewählerei 247 (text 10), and Westendorff, Handbuch II 743.
46   See for further information Westendorff, Handbuch II 742f.
47   See von Lieven, Himmel 53.
48   Translation by Leitz, Tagewählerei 246 (text 2).

"The scourge is in your (= Sopdu) hand, the mks-scepter behind your hand.
The ẖ3tyw fall down on their faces, the circumpolar stars are kneeling be-
fore you."

The *ẖ3tyw* are obviously combined with the decan stars. The text de-
scribes the god Sopdu, ruler of the foreign lands, as a powerful ruler,
before whom the decan stars and also the circumpolar stars fall down.
This combination between the *ẖ3tyw* and the concept of stars can also
be found in the Coffin Texts[49] and some sources from Ptolemaic time.
Joachim Friedrich Quack has already pointed out that the *ẖ3tyjw* are the
seven deathly decans of the netherworld which bring illness and
death.[50] Therefore in texts from the late period the *ẖ3tyw* appear as ex-
ecutors of the divine punishment. In the so called Inaros story (Papyrus
Krall) they were sent by Osiris to raise a battle (pKrall 1.4 und 1.5):[51]

(1.4) Osiris called "Lover-of-Battle" and "Vengeance-of-Horus", the two
demons.
(1.5) He said to them: Hasten to earth! Go to Heliopolis and let battle com-
mence …"

A similar passage can be found in the myth Leiden 3,4f. There a female
vulture, who was robbed of her young by a cat, asked the god Re for
revenge. Therefore he sent a *ẖ3ty*, who punished the vulture.[52]

If we sum up, we can easily ascertain that the *ẖ3tyw* -beings have a
clearly negative function. On the one hand they stand for the commu-
nication between a distant god and the world of man, on the other they
are associated with illness and death.[53] But according to the principles
of Egyptian religion it is also possible by magic and symbolic acts to
protect oneself against the dangerous divine messengers. The so-called
magical spells for mother and child from the Middle Kingdom give an
example for this special meaning:[54]

"Go away whom, who comes from the darkness … If you are coming, to
kiss this child, I won't let you kiss it. If you are coming to harm it, I won't
let you harm it. … I have got his spell for protection obtained from Afa-
herb."

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49 See CT VI, 107d-f and Leitz, Tagewählerei 246 (Text 6).
50 Quack, Rezension Leitz 283f.
51 Hoffmann, Kampf 132f. See also the parallel to the Inaros story of P. Krall on the
    Demotic Narratives from the Tebtunis Temple Library: Ryholt, Parallel 164.
52 See Lieven, Himmel 52 with note 201.
53 See for other references Lieven, Himmel 54.
54 See for this text the new edition by Yamazaki, Zaubersprüche, and for the quoted
    passage Kurth, Suum cuique 56.

2.2 The concept of *wpwtyw*

Whereas the concept of *ḫ3tyw* describes negative and subordinate deities, the meaning of *wpwtyw* in Egyptian religion is quite different. As mentioned above, the word can be used as a generic term for divine messengers and it includes also a positive meaning. If we start with the term itself, the word *wpwtyw* firstly contains the messenger or envoy in general.[55] In the Old Kingdom the term referred to a socially high ranking official assigned to the vesir. His main duties were to deliver messages, especially in diplomatic affairs.[56] In the Middle Kingdom and namely in the New Kingdom the term refers to diplomats and political envoys.[57] Religious texts like the Book of Dead used the term for divine messengers who could have a negative association (e.g. a crocodile deity).[58] An interesting passage can be found in the well known narrative of Wenamun. Because of the special significance of this text for the distinction between a human messenger and a divine one, it is necessary to go into more detail.[59]

The narrative of Wenamun tells a story about a priest named Wenamun, who was supposed to obtain cedar wood from Lebanon that was needed to build a new procession boat for the god Amun. Wenamun set off on his journey with a letter of recommendation and – as the story tells later – a statuette with the name "Amun-of-the-Road". During his journey a number of incidents occurred[60] and when Wenamun arrived in Byblos, at first he was not admitted to the lord of the city. But then the god Amun-Re himself intervened and procured a local oracle medium. This changed the situation completely and Wenamun was allowed to meet Tjeker-Baal, the lord of Byblos. The following passage of the narrative contains a longer dialogue, where the real reason for his journey, to obtain timber for the procession boat of the Theban god Amun-Re, becomes more and more insignificant.[61] The main focus is on the claim of the god Amun-Re to the Lebanon, which is confronted by the counterclaim of Tjeker-Baal, the lord of Byblos. In this dialogue Wenamun said to the lord of Byblos:

> "(2,53) As for Chaemwese, the envoys he sent you were men. And he himself was a man (2,54). You have not here one of his envoys, though you

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55 See Valloggia, Recherche 1 (§ 100).
56 Valloggia, Recherche 30 (§ 107).
57 See Otto, Bote 846.
58 So e.g. in Book of the Dead, Chapter 31; see Lucarelli, Demons 205f.
59 A good English translation can be found by Lichtheim, Literature II 224-230.
60 See Rößler-Köhler Reise, 137-139, and Baines, Wenamun 215f.
61 Eyre, Irony 238f.

could say: 'Go and see your companions'. Should you not rejoice (2,55) and have a stela made for yourself, and say on it: ‚Amun-Re, King of Gods, sent me Amun-of-the-Road, his (2,56) envoy – he should be alive, safe and healthy – together with Wenamun, his human envoy, in quest of timber for the great and noble bark of Amun-Re, King of Gods."

The crucial point in this passage is that there is an explicit distinction between the "human envoy" Wenamun and the divine messenger, the statuette "Amun-of-the-Road".[62] Moreover, the messengers of the pharaoh "Chaemwese" as well as "Chaemwese" himself were referred to as human envoys. The passage reflects the change of the Egyptian royal ideology after the end of the New Kingdom, when the god Amun-Re was worshipped as the most important king and the divine character of the king, which was traditionally a main part of the royal ideology in Ancient Egypt, was assigned to the god itself.[63] The "Chaemwese" is supposed to be Ramses IX., one of the last rulers of the New Kingdom.[64] In the hieroglyphic papyri the divine messenger is insofar determined as 'divine' as the author of the narrative uses the typical formulae „ᶜnh(.w), wḏB(.w) snb(.w)' (*he should be alive, safe and healthy)*, which is normally used for gods or the divine pharaoh. According to this, Wenamun is called a "human envoy" (*wpwty rmṯ*).[65] This distinction is also the main point of the narrative itself, because the text distinguishes between the human envoy and the divine messenger. The first fails accross the board, whereas the latter brings about the change.[66] This can be seen in a passage which relates the dialogue between Wenamun and Tejker-Baal. Wenamun responded to the reproach of Tjeker-Baal that his travels are foolish by alluding to the incident at the harbour of Byblos, where he has to wait for 29 days before Amun-Re intervenes himself:

"(2,22) I said to him: (2,23) Wrong! These are not foolish travels that I am doing! There is no ship on the river that does (2,24) not belong to Amun. His is the sea and his is the Lebanon of which you say: 'It is mine'. (…) [Tru]ly, it was Amun-Re, King of Gods, who said to Herihor, (2,26) my master: "Send me!" And he made me come with this great god. But look, you have let (2,27) this great god spend these 29 days moored in your harbour, withour knowing that he is there?"

The statuette of Amun-Re is referred to as the "great god" and therewith as representative of Amun itself. Something quite similar can be

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62   See Valloggia, Recherche 40 (§ 108).
63   See for this concept Römer, Gottesherrschaft 324.
64   See Schipper, Wenamun 208, and for the birthname of Ramesses XI. von Beckerath, Handbuch 174 (N 10).
65   See the hieroglyphic text by Gardiner, Stories 72 (2,56).
66   See Schipper, Erzählung 280, and Baines, Wenamun 217.

found on a stela of the 21ˢᵗ dynasty and thus from the time where the narrative of Wenamun could be dated. This inscription, the so-called 'stela of the banishment', contains an oracle of the god Amun to the high priest Menkheperre.

> "(16) Then the great god agreed greatly (…) Then he stepped again before the great god, saying (…) (18) Then the great god agreed emphatically".

The epitheton "great god" (nṯr ꜥ3) refers to the cult-image of the god. It can be assumed that the narrative of Wenamun does not refer to the cult-image of Amun-Re, but to a statuette of the God, like those exemplars, which have often been found in Syria-Palestine.[67] In the plot of the story, the statuette expresses as a divine envoy the power of the god Amun-Re and his claim on the territory of Syria-Palestine. Therefore the main focus of the narrative is on the question of the power of the god Amun-Re over the former provinces of Egypt which were lost during the last pharaohs of the New Kingdom. The narrative has a political intention, communicated by religious propaganda.[68]

If we look at the concept of the divine messengers, several aspects are interesting. In the narrative of Wenamun two different actors appear as envoys. On the one hand the statuette itself, which is understood as divine messenger, and on the other the human envoy. Both were denominated with the word *wpwty*, but differently determined. The statuette symbolised the power of the god itself, who acts through this divine envoy. This is important in a double sense, because normally a deity acts through another god, and – furthermore – the concept of *wpwty* does not have a negative connotation like the *wpwtyw* of Sachmet or Atum. The divine messenger has a positive function: he stands for a political claim and acts in order of the highest god, the god Amun-Re.

2.3 The god Thoth

A similar notion as a messenger of the highest god of all is connected with the god Thoth. He appears already in Pharaonic Egypt as divine messenger, and in the Greek period he was combined with Hermes.[69] Sometimes he was regarded as archetype for the Christian conception of the angel Michael. In an article which appeared in 1956, the Egyptologist and religious scholar Günter Lanczkowski wanted to show a

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67   For further references see Schipper, Erzählung 180f.
68   See for this religious aspect Eyre, Irony 242, and Egberts, Times 101.
69   See Doxey, Thot 398.

few similarities between Thoth and Michael.[70] Nevertheless, these similarities are too unspecific to see any close connection,[71] although the god Thoth is quite interesting for the question of divine messengers in Ancient Egypt.

Thoth was worshipped from the Early Dynastic period through Roman times. Primarily a moon deity he became the main god of scribes and writings. Thot can be combined with other deities, for instance as son of Horus or of Osiris. Highly important is the connection with the sun-god Re. Some sources of the 18th dynasty refer to him as "son of re", and also in Pyramid Texts Thot is associated to the sun god.[72] Both were referred to as "the two companions, who cross over the sky" (Pyr. 128 b-c).[73] With the function of a lunar god, Thoth also appears in the Coffin Texts and the Book of the Dead: "I know what is small on the second day and large on the fifteenth: the god Thoth".[74] In Ptolematic temple inscriptions, Thoth can be seen as regulator of the phases of the moon.[75]

His importance as divine messenger is founded by his role in the Osiris legend and in the divine judgement in the Book of the Dead (Chapter 125). In the Osiris legend he assists Horus and Anubis in reconstructing the body of Osiris and teaches Isis the spells necessary to revive Osiris. He replaces the head of Isis after Horus cuts it off in a rage, and finally, he helps to bring the proceedings to a conclusion by suggesting that the Ennead contact Osiris for his opinion.[76] In accordance with his association with Maat he can appear in illustrations of the divine judgement. Thot is the one who welcomes the deceased and leads him to the deities of the hall of judgement. In Chapter 125 of the Book of the Dead we can read:[77]

> "I will not make mention of you", says the guardian of the door of this Hall, "unless you tell me my name."
> "Discerner of hearts and searcher of the reins" is your name.
> "Who is the god that dwells in his hour?"
> Speak to the interpreter of the two lands.
> "Who is this?"
> "The interpreter of the two lands – that is Thoth."

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70   Cf. Lanczkowski, Thot 117-127. Görg, Mythos 100, has already voted for a connection between Thot and the angel Gabriel.
71   See the criticism of Müller, Engellehre 89 note 673.
72   See Doxey, Thot 398 and Lanczkowski, Thot 122.
73   See Kurth, Thot 504.
74   Kurth, Thot 504, and Wilkinson, Gods 215f.
75   See Kurth, Thot 505.
76   See Doxey, Thot 400.
77   See for the translation Hornung, Totenbuch 243f.

The following passage explains how Thoth reports the deceased to the lord of the netherworld, the god Osiris. Thoth has obviously the duty to communicate between gods and men. With this function he is named in another text, the so-called "myth of the birth of the Godking". The mythological tale reports of the god Amun, telling a council of gods in heaven that he wants to have an heir to the throne conceived. He sends the god Thot as envoy with a message to the queen:[78]

> "Spoken by Thoth, the lord of Hermopolis: [Pleased is] Amun with your real dignity as rpˁtt, great in grace, mistress of pleasantness, sweet in love like Atum, ruler of all countries"

Thot delivers the queen the message that the god Amun has given her a higher rank (as a *rpˁtt*). He does not proclaim to her the birth of a child – this is reserved to the god – but Amun's pleasure.[79]

The connection between Thot and the highest god appears also in Temple texts from the Ptolemaic period. There Thot is travelling to Nubia for the god Re to pacify the raging Tefnut and persuade her to return to Egypt.[80] This positive notion of the god Thot is crucial insofar, as he can also have negative significance. He can appear as a violent and dangerous deity, for instance in an inscription from Wadi Charig (Sinai), where he is mentioned as "Lord of the massacre, who suppresses Asia" or in the Book of Death, where he decapitates the enemies of the deceased.[81] As a deity, associated to Re, he joined the nightly journey of the sun, where one of his duties is to bring the enemies of Re to death. Thot adopted here the role of the god Seth, which is a negative one according to the Egyptian system of gods.[82]

3. Summary

It could not be the aim of a short article to give a comprehensive overview of the difficult and complex question of divine messengers in Ancient Egypt. But this brief presentation of the main sources has revealed a few points which could be interesting for the topic of this anthology. The first point is that in Egypt we cannot speak of angels or demons. The Egyptian religion with its dynamic system and its ambiguous world of gods knows no favourable or hostile divine messen-

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78 Brunner, Geburt 80 (VIILa).
79 See Brunner, Geburt 81, and Kügler, Pharao 43f.
80 See Doxey, Thot 399.
81 Kurth, Thot 503.
82 See Kurth, Thot 503.

gers. According to the evidence, the concept of divine messengers is primarily a functional one which is determined as the case arises. Therefore, also deities at the top of the pantheon like Thot or Hathor can act as envoys of a god and thus in a subordinate role. On the other hand we have basically to distinguish between such independent gods as Hathor or Thoth, who could act as envoys, and subordinated deities, which solely function as divine messengers. As could be seen in the — 3tyw, in the sense of dependent subordinated beings, these gods bring illness and harm. In contrast to the independent gods they have solely a negative significance.

The second main point is the combination of the concept of divine messengers with the cosmological system of Egyptian Religion in general: the concept based on the general distinction between a world of gods and a world of man. This can be seen in the mythological tale of 'The Destruction of Mankind', where the concept of divine messengers is explicitly combined with a cosmological order. In this worldview it seems to be one of the main duties of the divine messengers to guarantee the communication between these two separate spheres. According to the medical and magical texts they are bringing harm, but the example of the god Thoth shows that a messenger of god could also act in a favourable way. Furthermore, one of the probably most interesting references is the narrative of Wenamun with its distinction between a "divine" and a "human envoy". This passage can be understood in the way that obviously only a representative of the divine world can act as a messenger of god, and not human beings. In the narrative of Wenamun it is the god Amun himself, who slipped into the role of the envoy and expresses as the statuette 'Amun-of-the-Road' his political-religious claim.

If we proceed from the example of the Egyptian religion to a more systematic perspective, the concept of divine messengers reflects the prevalence, professionalisation and hierarchization of a religion. With the concept of a highest and also distant god, a space is opened for subordinated deities which communicated with other gods or with the world of man. According to this, the 'divine messengers' can be seen as 'intermediate beings', albeit primarily in a functional sense. Their main duty is to bridge over the distance between god and man, especially when due to the hierarchization of religion the space between both spheres becomes wider and wider.

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Demons and Benevolent Spirits in the Ancient Near East

A Phenomenological Overview

MANFRED HUTTER, BONN

1. Introductory remarks

When we talk about "demons" in Ancient Near Eastern cultures we can start with the Greek loanword to European languages. The Greek word *daímōn* can originally refer to any supernatural beings, and was sometimes also used as a parallel word to *theói* ("gods").[1] It is further important to remember that the word in its early usage did not refer to negative semantics. As divine beings in ancient cultures often can be considered as ambiguous, daímones could be considered as either "evil" or "good" in the early use of the word.

This ambivalence of "demons" can also be seen in Mesopotamia, Northern Syria and Anatolia, but one has to acknowledge that in the majority of cases, "demons" get a negative image. In terms of terminology – contrary to Greek evidence – there is no general term for "demons" in the relevant languages but a variety of words, for which the modern scholar in an additive way can employ the translation "demon(s)". As there is no general term for "demon", cuneiform texts can use the sign DINGIR ("god") also for demons, meaning that within the cosmological and theological context "demons" are ontologically closer to gods than to men. Therefore they act from the divine sphere and interfere with humans, but can also act as divine messengers which sometimes gives them a function comparable to angels, but normally in translations the English term "angel" is used only seldom for such beings; the reason for this may be that the physical appearance of these beings more often than not evokes images comparable to the European depiction of demons in the Middle ages; so one cannot rule out that

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1   Cf. Riley, Demon 235-236; Hutter, Dämonen / Geister 533; Heeßel, Pazuzu 4.

talking and writing about "demons" in the Ancient Near East in academic discourse since the late 19th century has also been influenced by western conception of Christian Medieval demons.[2]

Turning to ancient Iran, we face a different situation. The Iranian religious system as it is available to us according to sources from the first millennium BCE, is based on a dualism of a spiritual realm which is explicitly either good or evil;[3] this dualistic setting at least in its general structure can be tracked back to Zoroaster who lived in Eastern Iran at the end of the second millennium or at the turn of the millennium. The two dualistic principles are mentioned in the early Zoroastrian tradition as two spirits (in Avestan: *mainyu*), the "holy" one and the evil one, and some texts even consider them as twins. The historical development of Zoroastrianism already during the first half of the first millennium BCE started to elaborate on these spirits: the holy spirit not only was identified with Ahura Mazda, the supreme God in the early Zoroastrian pantheon, but also other "immortal and holy" spirits (*ameša spentas*) and divine beings (*yazatas*) surrounded Ahura Mazda; sometimes western scholars call these beings even "angels". The evil spirit became even more personalized as Angra Mainyu, who not only functions as the anti-god and the adversary of Ahura Mazda but who also became surrounded by a huge host of demons (*daēwas*); systematic theological writings of the Zoroastrians partly even construct an exact ranking of "angels" and "demons" in a precise opposite way.

Bearing this in mind, theorizing about "demons" in the Ancient Near East should avoid an exclusively negative notion. From Mesopotamia to Anatolia we can see that there are intermediary beings between the human and divine world, who can easier than "gods" transcend the boundaries between these two worlds. They can interfere in our world both in a negative or positive way; in order to avoid or counteract their negative interference, rituals and incantations have been used, which therefore provide important source materials about such beings. In Iran the situation is different, because we can say that talking of "demons" with exclusively negative semantics is appropriate for Zoroastrianism and Iran.

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2   Cf. Heeßel, Pazuzu 4-6; Ahn, Demon 504.
3   Cf. Hutter, Gott 19-20; Stausberg, Religion 90-99.

2. Demons as "lesser gods" or "anti-gods"

2.1 Cuneiform cultures

The Mesopotamian "pantheon" with its main gods is hierarchically structured, and divine beings of a lesser rank are "demons" or protective spirits.[4] Their function and might are more limited than that of the gods, and especially, their functions are more specified and related to an evil or undesirable situation in my opinion. Therefore many ways to counteract their functions or to protect oneself from such mischief are known in various texts; if we want to characterize Mesopotamian demons in a general way, one magical conjuration against them shows us that they are considered as different from other divine or human beings:[5]

> "They are seven, they are seven,
> They are seven in the springs of the depths,
> They are seven, adorned in heaven.
> They grew up in the springs of the depths, in the cella.
> They are not male, they are not female,
> They are drifting phantoms,
> They take no wife, they beget no son.
> They know neither sparing of life nor mercy,
> They heed no prayers nor entreaties.
> They are steeds that grew up in the mountains,
> They are the evil ones of Ea,
> They are the prefects of the gods.
> They loiter in the side streets to make trouble on the highway.
> They are evil, they are evil!
> They are seven, they are seven, they are twice seven!
> Be conjured by heaven, be conjured by the netherworld."

One general aspect of demons deduced from this text is their anomaly, and another feature of demons that gets clear from this quotation is their anonymity. Other texts also mention many names or epithets of demons and their character. The Akkadian incantation text Maqlû (V 64-71) e.g. gives a list of demons, all characterized as "evil": *utukku, alû, gallû, rābiṣu, labāṣu, lamaštu, lilû, lilītu* and *ardat lilî.*

Other texts tell about conflicts between gods and "demons", who then function as anti-gods. In the Enūma Eliš, Tiamat prepares herself to battle against Marduk by arranging her army – made up of demons:[6]

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4   Cf. Groneberg, Aspekte 147-150; Hutter, Dämonen 533-534.
5   Foster, Days 407.
6   Foster, Epic 395; cf. Foster, Days 23.

> "She [Tiamat] deployed serpents, dragons, and hairy hero-men, lion monsters, lion men, scorpion men, mighty demons, fish men, bull men, bearing unsparing arms, fearing no battle. Her commands were absolute, no one opposed them. Eleven indeed on this wise she created. From among the gods her offspring, who composed her assembly, she raised up Qingu from among them, it was he she made greatest!".

The following battle among gods clearly shows that these "demons" are some lesser gods who oppose the higher ones, but still are gods. It is interesting to refer also to the myth "Išum and Erra", when it is mentioned that the divine nature of the Sebetti is different (from other gods)[7] – but also their divineness is not challenged in any way. Another relatively detailed description of demons can be found in the Sumerian myth of Inanna's descent to the netherworld; after the goddess can leave the netherworld for a while, she is accompanied by hords of demons:[8]

> "Small demons like a corral, big demons like guardhouse, clung to her side. Those who accompanied her, those who accompanied Inanna know no food, know no drink, eat no grain offering, drink no libation, accept no nice gifts, never enjoy the pleasure of sexual intercourse, never have sweet children to kiss, but tear the wife away from her husband during intercourse, carry off children from their father's knees, and remove the bride from her marriage chamber."

This description shows one further aspect of demons: they only seldom have an individuality, but they appear as hosts of demons or as a group, who has a leader, but generally they appear as an anonymous group. But this also leads to the notion that one cannot address them exactly because of their anonymity and they can only be identified as individuals in incantation texts with some difficulty. But without being called by name they cannot be handled well by the exorcist.

Similar ideas about demons are also known from sources coming from Ancient Syria, when we neither can put a sharp borderline between gods who can bring harms to humans or demons and evil ghosts.[9] Also in Syria we encounter conflicts among gods in mythological traditions, when the rivals of the successful or victorious gods are depicted as evil demons. One impressive example are two texts from Ugarit: KTU 1.102 gives a list of divine beings, on its obverse some well-known gods are mentioned, on the reverse minor "gods" or "demons"; comparing the names on the reverse of KTU 1.102 with KTU 1.106, we can come to some further conclusions. KTU 1.106 refers to

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7   Dalley, Erra 405; cf. Foster, Days 134.

8   Sladek, Descent 175-176.

9   Cf. Wyatt, Religion 549; del Olmo Lete, Religion 44-45, – both with further references.

offerings for Rašpu and the funerary cult, which leads to the result that at least partly "Ugaritic demonology" is related to the realm of dead and the netherworld.[10] This connection with the realm of death also puts demons in relation to sickness, but also to harmful ghosts of deceased ancestors.

Some individual demons from Ugarit texts can be mentioned here again: in the mythological traditions mentioned in relation to the Ugaritic god Baᶜlu, some anti-gods are engaged in battle with him, namely Lotanu or Tunnanu; they both are helpers of Yammu, the god of the sea and Baᶜlu's adversary, but their function and description also allows us to treat them as "demons". As people of Ugarit were afraid of evil spirits and demons who could threaten their health or their general well-being, Baᶜlu and ᶜAnatu sometimes were invoked as helpers against such "demonic" beings; in the incantation text KTU 1.82 Baᶜlu is asked to destroy several demons like Tunnanu, Rašpu and his arrows of pestilence, some of Horonu's negative creatures, the night-demons, and the "sons of the disease"; it is quite possible that this text in a concrete ways focuses on the bite of a snake and to cure the patient from the poisonous bite; but the imaginary used in the texts relates this misfortune to demons.[11]

Also texts in Hittite language from Anatolia, mainly from the 15th to the 13th century BCE, tell us about demonic beings who bring harm to people and who are minor gods; but also among the Hittites some of these divine beings are ambivalent. Terminologically, Hittite texts also use the logogram DINGIR ("god") for demons, but some composite names of such beings are built with the word –*sepa* "genius, demon". Some terrifying minor gods can be seen as demons,[12] e.g. the Innarawantes, who are wearing bloodied clothes, or the Hantisepa-gods, whose eyes are red with blood and whose clothes are bloodied. Also the reference to a statue of Sulinkatte who holds a sword in his right hand and the head of a man in his left hand, gives the impression that this warrior-like god shows demonic features. Such references show that also in the Hittite texts "demons" are divine beings or some gods in special occasion serve some "negative" and demonic function.

When we try to generalize Ancient Near Eastern thoughts about demons we should also mention their physiognomy. While gods in many cases are described in a human form, sometimes also with wings and to be differentiated from humans by their attributes, "Demons" are

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10   Cf. del Olmo Lete, Religion 58-61, 231-232.
11   Cf. del Olmo Lete, Religion 373-379; de Moor, Anthology 175-181. Further texts dealing with demons are e.g. KTU 1.96, KTU 1.100 or KTU 1.169.
12   Haas, Geschichte 371, 503; Hutter, Aspects 252.

described having a mixed body – they can have an animal's head with a human body, sometimes their body is composed of parts of humans, four-legged animals and birds, or to a human body a tail or horns or claws are added. This corporeal form refers to their strength, which is much bigger than that of a human being, but also refers to their danger. Some typical "demonic" features can be expressed by the lion's or bull's strength or by the serpent's or dragon's venom. The description of the demons, who accompany Tiamat in a battle against the generation of younger gods, mentions what demons look like. Another example of the terrifying form can be found in a text from Ugarit (KTU 1.12,20-41).[13]

> "Go out into the plain of the demons, into the desert of the murderous god. Dig, o handmaid, throw up the dust furiously, position the two bricks. Writhe and bear the Devourers, crouch and bear the Rippers.
> Ilu proclaimed their names. On them were horns like bulls, and humps like oxen, and on them was the face of Baᶜlu. ... Surely Baᶜlu coveted them, the son of Daganu fancied them. Baᶜlu stalked them on foot, yes, the god Haddu on tip-toe."

Though such ideas of the form of demons can be frightening, they again expresses their ambivalent character. The awful form has also apotropaic functions: the negative form of "demons" is also an appropriate means to ward off all kinds of evil. Therefore such "demons" can also function as guardian spirits, so that statues of such divine beings are displayed at the entrance of temples because they also are protective beings, ranging as minor deities, who can interfere in a benevolent – or malevolent – way in the cosmos and the world of the humans.

2.2 The dualistic concept in Iran

Originally, the early Iranian concepts of demons might have been similar to the other Ancient Near Eastern areas, in a way that with the polytheistic old Iranian pantheon gods had both good and evil sides, depending on their relationship to each other, but also depending on man's behaviour towards his gods. A change in this concept occurred in the teachings of Zoroaster and his followers, who rearranged this world-view and consequently also the position of gods along dualistic lines, with clear distinction between good divine and evil demonic beings. The Zoroastrian scriptures reflect this reorganization of the pantheon and later Iranian texts get more and more detailed.

13　De Moor, Anthology 130-131.

So we find already a systematic hierarchy of demons headed by Angra Mainyu in the younger Avestan texts during the first half of the first millennium BCE. The "evil spirit" who is the main opponent and adversary of the "holy spirit" (Spenta Mainyu) had become identified with Ahura Mazda as the supreme god of Zoroastrianism by the middle of the first millennium BCE at the latest.[14] Both antagonistic principles are in battle since the beginning of the world (Yt 13,76-78):[15]

> "For they [the Frawašis] are the bravest of the creation of both Spirits, the good, strong, beneficent Frawašis of the Righteous, who rose up (to help) then when the two Spirits, both the Beneficent Spirit and the Evil, created (their) creations. When the Evil Spirit stormed the creation of Good Truth, Good Mind and Fire rushed in between. These two overcome the hostilities of him, the lying Evil Spirit."

As an opposite to Ahura Mazda's creation, Angra Mainyu sets his "anti-creation" in action; the most famous expression of this counter-creation is any kind of harm and all kinds of sickness, as we can read in a passage in the Vendidad (22,2.9). Angra Mainyu thus becomes the archdemon or the "demon of demons" who leads all the others; a high ranking list of the main Zoroastrian demons mentions the following ones: Indra, Saurwa, Nanhaitya, Taurwi and Zairik;[16] a whole list of such central demons in Zoroastrianism counts seven demons, a number which corresponds to the seven "Amesha Spentas" – the "Holy Immortal Ones" as good divine beings surrounding Ahura Mazda.

As one of the general characteristics of these Avestan demons[17] one can mention that they are closely associated with lie, who is personalized as the she-demon "Lie" (Druj). Druj also becomes associated with other demons since the first half of the first millennium BCE, e.g. with Nasu, the she-demon of death, or with the dragon-like demon Azi Dahaka; another important demon within Zoroastrianism is the Aeshma, the demon of wrath, whose name and function is still reflected as Asmodaios in the Book of Tobit of the Greek Old Testament.[18] It is along these dualistic lines that Zoroastrianism arranges its religious system and everybody is engaged to counteract all these demons throughout one's life in order to help to overcome their might already in this world; but the final defeat of the demons will happen only at the end of time by the future saviour (Yt 19,95-96):[19]

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14   Stausberg, Religion 132.
15   Malandra, Introduction 113.
16   Cf. Malandra, Introduction 21.
17   Stausberg, Religion 123, 135-136; cf. further Christensen, Essai.
18   Hutter, Asmodeus.
19   Malandra, Introduction 96-97.

"The companions of the victorius Astwat.areta will come forth having good minds, good speech, good deeds (and) good daēnas, who also do not speak falsehoods with their own tongues. Wrath with the bloody cudgel, whose Xwarenah is evil, will flee before them. Through Truth, Astwat.areta will be victorious over the evil Lie (Druj) who is hideous, who is composed of darkness. He will also be victorious over the Evil Spirit. The Good Spirit will be victorious over it. He will be victorious over the falsely spoken word. The rightly spoken word will be victorious over it. He will conquer health and immortality, both hunger and thirst. Health and Immortality will conquer evil hunger and thirst. Angra Mainyu, the doer of evil deeds, impotent, will flee."

3. Demons, individual mischief and society

Asking for the origin of the negative aspects of "demons" as we see them in the cuneiform cultures, one way of explanation can be given from the human experience of man's limitedness. People who experience natural catastrophes like thunderstorms, sudden death or disease which cannot be explained, are threatened with fear. From this point of view, demons are personifications of such situations of mischief which cannot be foreseen. The reason why such "demons" overpower a person, lies within the sphere of magic or within the general evil character which then marks a central feature of demons. Such experiences lead to systems and typologies of demonic beings. Therefore several demons are closely associated with this natural phenomenon; the most popular demons that can be mentioned in this context are the Sumerian LIL-demons. Others may be characterized as bringing all kinds of illness, which enter the human body like winds and storms. From one text we get information how several demons take hold of a person, leading to his weakening and illness. In the Middle Babylonian version of the myth "Nergal and Erekigal" Nergal is accompanied on his way to the netherworld by fourteen demons:[20]

"I shall give you seven and seven demons to go with you: […, …, …], Flashes-of-Lightning, Bailiff, Croucher, Expulsion, Wind, Fits, Staggers, Stroke, Lord-of-the-Roof, Feverhot, Scab."

Some names of these demons can be identified as some kinds of illness, like Bennu (fits), Libbu (scab) or Ummu (heat, fever). But also Anatolian magical (therapeutic) texts mention demons who can be identified as markers of illness. More systematically we find – according to the dualistic setting – the connection of demons with illness in Zoroastrian-

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20   Dalley, Nergal 390.

ism, as already mentioned above. Angra Mainyu is the creator of all kinds of demons, who weaken man's health and bring all diseases to him, as well as of the she-demon of death who is part of this group.

Another possibility to arrange demons as a group refers to sexual behaviour or the field of sexuality and fertility in general. Here we also encounter a further aspect, namely the concept of impurity. In ancient Near Eastern cultures sexual contacts result in cultic impurity and some ritualistic purification becomes necessary. If such a purification does not take place, demons can get hold of such a person to weaken him; but also forms of miscarriage or missing fertility or impotence can be attributed to the influence of demons. In the Mesopotamian and Syrian area, both Lilītu and Lamaštu[21] are female demons who are associated with childbirth and death in childbed, further as beings whose sexual behaviour deviates from "normal" sexuality. Texts refer to Lilītu mentioning that her sexuality is of some "other" kind, as she does not sleep with a man as a man sleeps with his wife. In this way, Lilītu can be compared with Ištar who stands at the window looking for a man in order to seduce him, love him and kill him.[22] Another fact that shows that Lilītu's sexuality is not a regular kind of sexuality, is illustrated by references which show that she cannot bear children and that she has no milk but only poison to feed a baby as a deceitful wet-nurse. This mixing up of ideas originally referring either to Lilītu or to Lamaštu began already during the Middle Babylonian period and this demonized being also spread to Syria in course of time – as a female demon, endangering both men with her seduction and women by stealing their babies or bringing miscarriage to them. The same applies to Zoroastrian traditions; though sexuality is not seen as a demonic force, the she-demon of sexual desire who is also considered as the primeval whore[23] seduces the righteous one in order to lead him astray so that he might join the realm of Angra Mainyu and oppose Ahura Mazda's good creation.

Demons are part of the cosmos, so they are not limited to some special place or to a given time. But we can see that sometimes both time and space are related to them in a special way. As they are considered anonymous and cannot be seen or identified exactly, they are excellent sources of "fear", which arises especially at night-time. In the darkness of the night their invisibility is even greater than during day-time; also those demons who are connected with sexuality, can be associated with the night. Then again, also midday and the heat of the high risen sun is

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21 Groneberg, Aspekte 147-148; cf. also Heeßel, Pazuzu 74-75.
22 Groneberg, Aspekte 159-162.
23 Cf. de Jong, Jeh.

taken as the moment when demons can best attack man. Fever brought by demons and the hot weather thus get compared. – Referring to space, they prefer to stay in the wilderness or at places outside the cultural area, which in "normal life" one wants to avoid to stay there. They linger around at graveyards, close to caves or in the desert, but also in mountainous areas. So several texts mention the right behaviour and provide magical shelter in cases when one has to travel through such areas to avoid being attacked by demons. But not only such places, but also people who live outside the "cultural areas" and civilizations of the Ancient Near East, can therefore be associated with demons – leading to the demonizing of strangers and foreign lands or societies; thus we read in the Maqlû incantation that witches and sorceresses par excellence are women from Elam or Hanigalbat, or Qutaean or Sutaean women. Such mountainous areas with their inhabitants conquered or sacked Babylon several times in the course of history. This experience lead to the demonizing of the home-land of these people. Also several Hittite ritual texts which counteract bewitchment mention gossip, several kinds of illness, demonic beings and mountain dwellers or nomadic strangers side by side, who have overcome the patient by their magical and demonic means; therefore the patient has to be cured by magical and medical treatment. – As demons dwell outside the cultivated country,[24] some texts consider the language of demons of some other kind, but also the best way to counteract demons can be seen in addressing them in their own – and "not understandable" – language; several incantation texts therefore mix up different languages to address a demon – partly even highly mutilated forms of Sumerian, Elamian or Hurrian; by using these languages the exorcist provides his client with the psychological feeling and safety that the incantation will successfully address the demons and counteract the demonic bewitchment or lead it back to the sorcerer, because the therapeutic exorcist knows the "language of demons" which his client does not understand. But therefore this language has been considered to be very powerful to overcome demons.

In conclusion we have to say that demons also are closely related to society: people(s) who bring harm to others can be considered as demons and sorcerers or witches. Therefore incantation texts sometimes do not clearly distinguish between witches or demons (Maqlû IV 129). Some texts mention demons who will seize a person like a sorcerer

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24   Cf. on the "social demonising" of witches and foreigners also Abusch, Image 39-44; Haas, Dämonisierung and further Haas, Geschichte 882-884.

seizes such a person. So we can conclude that social conflicts also shape the Ancient Near Eastern ideas about demons.

4. General Conclusion

This phenomenological approach to demons in Ancient Near Eastern cultures and ancient Iranian culture according to Zoroastrian sources might also be of interest for further detailed comparisons between demons in the Ancient Near Eastern cultures and demons in the Biblical world. Demons like Lilith or Asmodaios, who are also mentioned in the Old Testament, clearly show cultural connections between the religious systems and ideas in Ancient Israel and the surrounding cultures. Several references in the Old Testament to demons who dwell in desert areas or whose appearance shows that they may look like animals or composite beings, express ideas which can be well compared to phenomena attributed to demons outside Ancient Israel, too. Also the "demonizing" of sorcerers and witches can be seen in a broader context. From the material covered above, I would like to focus on two results we should keep in mind when talking about demons and spirits in the Ancient Near East.

Demons are part of the superhuman cosmic sphere and they can be seen as minor deities whose interactions with humans are considered as negative and harmful. On a systematic and typological level, demons from Ancient Near East are only tentatively seen as negative beings because they can also interact in neutral ways with humans; this is the case when they act as divine messengers or as guardian spirits. From a phenomenological point of view, in this aspect they also share some functions with angels. Because of the dualistic system taught by Zoroaster in Eastern Iran first, Iranian demons are exclusively "demonic" beings or anti-gods who clearly oppose the gods of Ahura Mazda's good creation. So we can conclude that the status of demons, if they are "absolutely" or only "relatively" demonic beings, depends on the broader religious contexts in the society covered in this article.

In those cases where demons are actively involved with humans, humans have developed many means to protect themselves or to counteract such demons. In cuneiform literature, lots of incantation texts deal with the removal of demons or bewitchment which is thought to be brought to a person by a sorcerer or witch who is supported by demons. Specialists who use these incantation texts on behalf of a person who was threatened by demons, cover a wide range of "professions": therapeutics, specialists in medical treatment, doctors, or "psycholo-

gists"; cultic specialists for purification of the patient must be mentioned, too, because the state of impurity weakens a person so that demons can get hold of this person. The idea of impurity is also highly developed in Zoroastrianism as an excellent field where demons can seize a person; thus one Avestan text of the Zoroastrian religion (Videvdad) deals in very detailed order with the "law against demons", providing exact ritualistic and legalistic regulations of behaviour to avoid that demons can win might over a person. But because of the ethical aspects of Zoroaster's teaching, Zoroastrianism also puts heavy weight on the correct ethical behaviour of a person as an excellent way to counteract the influence of demons in the world, because due to his own ethical behaviour, every person can help to battle symbolically against the demons and thus also strengthen divine beings of the good creation. Thus we can conclude that man's reaction against demons first of all lies within a ritualistic context, that helps him both by medical, psychological and religious-ritualistic acts to overcome his fear of demons, which might also lead to his exclusion from society, if it cannot be removed by such means. In Iranian tradition, the ethical aspect of fighting against demons must not be overlooked either. So already early Zoroastrianism focuses on an aspect related to counteracting demons that is missing in the contemporary cultures in other parts of the Ancient Near East.

Abstract

The contribution focuses on the Ancient Near East mainly during the second and the first half of the first millennium BCE; geographically both the areas of Mesopotamia, Northern Syria and Anatolia as well as Iran will be covered. According to the systematically established dualism in ancient Iran, this area cannot be compared to the other areas directly. In consideration of the possibility of Iranian thoughts influencing the Old Testament, Iran should not be excluded in this contribution. Defining demons as "lesser gods" or even "anti-gods" will make the starting point, then the responsibility of demons for individual mischief as well as for the connection of demons and society with aspects of "demonizing" the outsider of the given society will be described.

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The Divine Messenger in Ancient Greece, Etruria and Rome

WOLFGANG SPEYER, SALZBURG

1. Introduction

The concept of the divine messenger – both male and female – in Homeric epics, which are for us the beginning of Greek literary tradition, in the first place tells us something about man. He appears as a being standing between the sensual phenomena in time and space and the world of the divine, of the superhumanly powerful which is perceived by his spirit-soul. At the same time this expresses the tension and the basic contrasts that concern the world and man: One contrast concerns the cosmos, the other man. As light and darkness, heaven and earth are placed in opposition to one another, so spirit and body as well as internal and external perception are inside man. As the senses inform about the external world, so does the spirit, which surpasses the merely logical faculties of reason, about the operating of the divine.

Homer and his age have seen the divine particularly in the Olympic or heavenly gods ruled by Zeus, the Indo-European lord of the heavens. For these early Greeks' experience the reception of certain revelations from the divine world by way of the spiritual soul corresponded to the impressions of the senses. Thus men of the Homeric age entered into a dialogue with reality which was oneness in twoness and multiplicity like they themselves. The sensual and the divine here correspond to one another like body and spiritual soul. Far up into the historical centuries of Greek, Etruscan and Roman cultures the world of sensual phenomena, that is of the *kosmos* or the *physis/ natura* as well as phenomena in man's inner self (just thinking of special dreams and visions), has revelatory character. Into this context also belong the concepts of the divine messenger (who is now imagined as a humanoid, now as bird-shaped) and divine messages.

The Greek term for the divine messenger, ἄγγελος, was transmitted into European languages by way of the Latin *angelus*. The human-personal nature is present in an intensified way in the divine messen-

ger who descends from the heights of heaven to men. Single sensual phenomena have helped to elaborate the ideas of divine messengers, whether the remarkably effective bird of prey, or the voice from heaven experienced as thunder or some other surprising sounds. [1]

For the appearance of the divine in sensual phenomena, for the theophany and kratophany – to which the presently discussed religious concept belongs – its suddenness, its unforeseeability is a characteristic feature.

Another way of visualizing the divine messenger resulted from ancient belief in spirits which includes reckoning with influences of Eastern cultures including the Ancient Near East as well. [2]

With regard to this theme the singers of Homeric epic poems – the Iliad and the Odyssey – have impressed the following ages until the end of Antiquity. What classical poets of the 5th century BC, what Hellenistic epic and lyrical poets and their Roman successors say about the divine messenger often is just an imitation and variation of respective Homeric scenes and suggestions. [3] Besides, since the end of the 5th century BC also criticism and parody are to be found, thus with Euripides and Aristophanes.[4]

When in Homer the male or female divine messenger appears in an immortal, remarkably beautiful human form, i.e. in an Olympic god or goddess, this god or goddess is more than this one function reveals. The Greek deities are exceedingly complex formations; within centuries they were elaborated; influences from pre-Greek culture are discernible as well as influences from the Ancient Near East. This is especially true for Hermes.[5] The singers of Homeric epic poems have particularly fashioned two deities as divine messengers: Iris and Hermes.

2. Iris

In the Iliad Iris is messenger of the Olympic gods Zeus and Hera.[6] She appears as messenger before deities and men, before Greeks and Trojans. Adjectives like "fast as the windy storm", "tempest-footed", or

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1   See below p. 41.
2   See below p. 43.
3   Mayer, Iris 331f.; Pease, Vergili 529f., 535-537 regarding 4:693-695; 700-704.
4   Euripides, Heracles 822f.; cf. Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, Euripides 121-123; Aristophanes, Aves 1196-1259.
5   Fauth, Hermes; Herter, Hermes; Baudy, Hermes; Zusanek, Hermes.
6   Mayer, Iris 325-332; Bruchmann, Epitheta 161f.; cf. Pease, Ciceronis 1086f. ; for 3:51; Bömer, Ovidius 105 ; for 1:270; Hunger, Lexikon 248f.

"with golden wings" indicate her extreme swiftness.[7] At first the goddess Iris and the rainbow, *iris*, probably were different ideas. Later on the rainbow could be seen as the goddess's track.[8]

When Hera and Athena were about to support the Greeks, Zeus sends Iris to announce to them his veto.[9] Correspondingly, she hurries to see Poseidon to transmit to him Zeus' order not to keep on assisting the Trojans.[10] On the other hand, she conveys an encouraging command of Zeus to Hector, as well.[11] Once even Hera sends her, namely to Achilles, so that he might rescue the slain Patroklos from the Trojans.[12] In the late last book she already shares her role with Hermes who has displaced her completely in the Odyssey. In later times the two messengers are related to each other in such a way that Iris more belongs to Hera, and Hermes to Zeus. In addition, a different estimation is to be seen: Iris conveys bad news, Hermes pleasing messages.[13]

3. Hermes

As compared with Iris Hermes is an extremely complex god whose history goes back via Arcadia to Babylonia when we consider the planetary god Hermes / Nebo.[14] His function as divine messenger forms one element among numerous others, though this was so important for the author of the Homeric hymn on Hermes that right in the beginning he emphasizes it: "Celebrate in a song, Muse, Hermes, the son of Zeus and Maja…, the blessing-bringing messenger of the immortals".[15]

The historical transition from the Iliad to the Odyssey is marked among other things by the fact that in the Iliad's last and latest canto Hermes – and no longer Iris – is sent by Zeus to safely accompany King

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7   Ilias 2:786; 5:353 and more often – 8:409 and more often – 8:398; 11:185 besides the adjectives ταχεία, ὠκέα "fast".
8   Pease, Ciceronis 1086f.; Hunger, Lexikon 248f.
9   Iliad 8:397-425.
10 Iliad 15:143-219.
11 Iliad 11:185-210.
12 Iliad 18:165-202.
13 Servius ad Aeneidem 5:606; 9,2; Mayer, Iris 331f.; cf. Pease, Vergili 529 for Vergilius, Aeneis 4:694: Irim.
14 Cicero enumerates no less than five different gods called Hermes / Mercurius, four of them having different genealogies: de natura deorum 3:56; cf. Pease, Ciceronis 1107-1114. See also above n. 5. – Jeremias, Nebo 57-60.
15 V.1-3; Orphicorum fragmenta 297,1 (Kern) = 413F,1 (1,342 Bernabé) he is called *Angelos*; Bruchmann, Epitheta 104 s.v. ἄγγελος.

Priam on his way from Troja to the Greek camp.[16] The function of a guide here outweighs the function of the messenger.[17] The original meaning of the fixed epithet of Hermes διάκτορος (with and without) ἀργειφόντης is not clear, it was probably taken from older pre-Homeric poetry.[18] Later on διάκτορος was understood as meaning "messenger". In this way Kallimachos once characterizes the owl of the goddess Athena, or Antipatros of Sidon the eagle of Zeus.[19]

Hermes' mediating activity is essential. It is evident in another passage of the Iliad: Zeus passes on the sceptre made for him by Hephaistos to Hermes, who is called a "ruler" here, and he transmits it to Pelops from whom Atreus, Thyestes, and Agamemnon receive it.[20] Thus this god is a mediator between King Zeus and the hero-kings.

His messenger role is elaborated more in detail in the Odyssey, which was written later than the Iliad. Right in the beginning Athena asks the Olympic gods to send Hermes to the nymph Kalypso so that she will dismiss Odysseus and the hero may return home. Zeus then commands his son to execute this commission.[21] Sent by Zeus Hermes approaches Aigisthos to warn him against marrying Klytaimestra and killing Agamemnon. But he was not succeessful here.[22]

Hermes thus connects the celestial world with the terrestrial one of man, and often so even crossing the earthly limits, the boundary of life. As he passes the threshold towards earthly life, so he does pass the threshold towards life after death. With his wand he closes men's eyes and wakes them again from sleep.[23] His way of operating is bipolar or ambivalent.[24] like that of gods in general. As a guide of souls, Psychopompos, he accompanies the souls of the suitors whom Odysseus has slain, to the netherworld, to Hades or the subterranean Zeus.[25] So Her-

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16   Iliad 24:333-338.

17   Iliad 24:153, 182, 437, 461: πομπός.

18   Iliad 2:103; 21:497; 24:339 and often in the Odyssey; Homerus, hymnus in Mercurium 392; Bruchmann, Epitheta 105.

19   Callimachus, frg. 519 (Pfeiffer); Antipater Sidonius: Anthologia Graeca 7:161,1; see below 40.

20   Iliad 2:100-109.

21   Odyssey 1:84-87; 5:28-148.

22   Odyssey 1:35-43.

23   Odyssey 5:47f.; 24:3f.; cf. Vergilius, Aeneis 4:242-244 (Pease): *tum virgam capit; hac animas ille evocat Orco / pallentis, alias sub Tartara tristia mittit.*

24   Speyer, Christentum 3, 15-33.

25   Odyssey 24:1-14; cf. Homerus, hymnus in Mercurium 571f.; Hermes is the "Angelos" guiding to Hades. For Hermes Angelos cf. Bernabé, Poetae 342, regarding Orphicorum fragmenta 413F,1; further Raingeard, Hermes; Kerényi, Hermes; Nußbaum, Geleit 952-954.

mes connects the hereafter with the present world, and the present world with the hereafter within a human scope.

As with Iris so also with Hermes the swiftness of his errand is praised. That is why in illustrations the god is wearing wings, wings on his shoes and on his cap.[26] The Iliad does not yet mention them, but it says that he can fly.[27] The wings Hermes is wearing link him with birds, more precisely with those birds which were considered to be Zeus' messengers.[28] In illustrations Hermes is wearing the *kerykeion*, Latin *caduceus*, the herald's wand characteristic of him, which is now shaped like a Y, now like two serpents facing each other, now like the figure eight.[29]

As messenger the god is at the same time the emissary and thus the representative of the supreme and all-deciding power, even so his father, the lord of the heavens, Zeus. As his son Hermes in his messenger-function transmits his father's commands to gods and men, namely in cases that have really occurred. So he belongs to supernatural intermediary beings like Iris.

Between this function of Hermes and the human soul there are the following correspondences: Like Hermes the spirit-soul is distinguished by swiftness, spontaneity, and presence. Therefore, the Greeks pictured the soul as winged and so to speak bird-shaped.[30] The soul, conceived as breath-soul, seemed to belong to the element of air or aether and so to the region of heaven.[31] Accordingly also Psyche, Eros' beloved, has wings, sometimes those of a butterfly, which indicate the change of the soul's form.[32] Like Hermes as the divine messenger is an intermediary between heaven, earth and the netherworld, between the present world and the hereafter, so is the human soul, too. Therefore, the soul and the god Hermes in his function as messenger and interpreter can appear as related to one another.[33] Not without this inner relation to one another the cult of Hermes as Hermes Logios became established in Antiquity.[34]

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26   Ley, Hermes II 431f.

27   Iliad 24:340-342. Aristophanes, Aves 573, mentions them; cf. Pease, Vergili, considering Vergilius, Aeneis 4:240.

28   See below 40.

29   The Iliad just mentions the wand: 24:343; cf. Odyssey 5:47; 24:3; de Waele, Magic 29-79: "Hermes-Mercurius".

30   Weicker, Seelenvogel; Rohde, Psyche, Reg.: "Seele, geflügelt…".

31   Rohde, Psyche, Reg.: "Aether", "Seelenreich in der Luft…".

32   Hunger, Lexikon 453-456, especially 454.

33   Orphicorum fragmenta 297,1 Kern = 413F,1 (1,342 Bernabé with parallels); Plato, Cratylus 407e; Kühnen, *interpres* 2251,31-42; Fauth, Hermes 1074; Jung, Geist 230-235.

34   Fauth, Hermes 1075; Herter, Hermes 195 note 5.

4. Birds

Since those gods who effect life and prosperity were imagined to dwell in heavenly regions, signs in the sky, especially if produced by birds, could be understood as messages from these deities, especially of the gods' father Zeus / Iuppiter. Birds were taken to be intermediary messengers; in particular the impressively large birds, the eagle and the vulture, were seen as divine messengers since the earliest phases of religion history in Antiquity.[35] Very often it reveals the divine purpose to the political-religious leader who is conceived as being the deity's elect.

It was also relevant for perceiving a bird as a divine messenger that it appeared and vanished unexpectedly and suddenly, that it was swift and not subject to human wishes.

Such birds interpreted as divine messengers seemed to express divine intentions by their nature and actions. Again the Iliad is the first text to talk about such a message: Zeus sends his eagle, "the most reliable among the augural birds". It held a fawn in its claws and threw it onto the altar where the Achaeans were worshipping Zeus by sacrificing. This message not given through words, but through an action encouraged the Danaeans so that they fought the Trojans with a fresh boldness.[36] That is why the eagle is called "Zeus' messenger, *angelos*",[37] as well. Thereby we touch the extensive field of Greek, and especially Etruscan and Roman augural practice, which consisted for the most part in observing the birds' flight, their cries and eating.[38]

Besides the eagle two different kinds of vultures were taken as messengers of the celestial, especially in Etruria and Rome. These ornithological species were often mixed up in Antiquity. But it is important that all three were interpreted as divine messengers until the age of the Roman emperors.[39]

However, other birds could appear as divine messengers as well. According to the tradition from Dodona both the oracles in Libya and Dodona were founded because there had appeared a black dove coming from Thebes in Egypt. In Dodona the black dove is said to have

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35   Speyer, Geier 438-441; 446-451; 454.

36   Iliad 8:247-252.

37   Iliad 24:290-298; 314-321; Aratus, Phaenomena 522f. (73f. Martin).

38   *Auspicium, auspico, auspicor, auspex* with an etymolog easily seen through: "to observe the birds".

39   See above 36.

rested on an oak and to have demanded in a human voice to establish an oracle. The same happened in Libya.[40]

With important undertakings, particularly when they were about to begin something, such as a military campaign or action or the founding of a town, Etruscans and Romans paid attention to the augury birds mentioned above. According to an Etruscan-Roman tale six and twelve vultures appeared to the founders of Rome, Remus and Romulus.[41] The augury of twelve vultures is said to have occurred to Octavianus / Augustus as well, when he became consul for the first time.[42]

5. Divine Voices

Antique grammarians already interpreted the divine messenger Iris also as a divine or heavenly voice.[43] The blending of a divine voice with a divine person seemed obvious enough. Here, too, Zeus was considered as the true originator as with his messages which were delivered by Iris or Hermes. Ossa, the voice, more precisely the rumour attributed to Zeus, could be called "messenger of Zeus".[44] In these cases it was the primary interest to perceive a divine revelation – similar to the oracles and other miraculous voices proceeding from sacred groves, from animals or also from men. Correspondingly Pheme, the divine voice, also appears as divine messenger and even as a goddess besides revelatory dreams.[45] So the word and the message might appear as an almost divine being like a divine figure. Actually, revelation could become manifest to the Greeks, Etruscans, and Romans in a very diversified way. Now the sense of seeing, now the sense of hearing prevails. In these interpretations originates the widespread antique belief in omens, Greek *terata*, Latin *prodigia*, *portenta*, *omina*, *ostenta* and *monstra*, which are a central subject of the Greek, and even more of the Etruscan and Roman religion.[46]

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40   Herodotus 2,54-57 with a rationalistic interpretation of the tradition by the historian.
41   Ennius, annales 72-91 (76f. Skutsch); Speyer, Geier 448f.
42   Suetonius, vita divi Augusti 95; Speyer, Geier 450f.; 454.
43   Hesychius s.v. Iris (2,374 Latte); Etymologicum Magnum 475,45; cf. Speyer, Himmelsstimme 288-293.
44   Iliad 2:93f.; Odyssey 1:282f.; 2:217f.; cf. Odyssey 24:412f.; Schmidt, Ossa.
45   Xenophon, convivium 4:48; Voigt, Pheme.
46   Speyer, Christentum 2, 207-219 (bibliography).

6. Spirits as Messengers and Guides

In Greece spirits / demons (sometimes also called *angeloi*) particularly
fulfil functions that are characteristic of angels in Judaism and in Chris-
tian contexts. We do not yet find them in the Homeric poems, but in
Hesiod, namely in his book "Works and Days", which is closely related
to popular belief. The passage on the four ages of times says about the
first generation, men living in the Golden Age: They died, nevertheless
they became beneficent demons after death and thus also preservers of
right. The poet calls them nearly guardian angels, namely "attendants
of mortals".[47] He modifies the idea later on, talking about 30,000 im-
mortal servants of Zeus and keepers of mortals".[48] In Hesiod, who is
the first Greek poet whom we know as an individual historical person,
the idea of guarding individual existence would probably germinate.[49]
The connections to believing in souls are evident – the heroes, who
belong to the 4th human generation in Hesiod, are deified souls as well.[50]
Since Hesiod the idea of beings that are supposed to come in between
the celestial and men developed more and more. Famous are Diotima's
words in Plato's Symposion: "For all demonic is in between god and
the mortal. – And what kind of activity … does it have? To interpret
and to deliver to the gods what comes from men, and to men what
comes from the gods: prayers and sacrifices of the one party and com-
mands and recompense for the sacrifices of the other… God does not
have intercourse with man, but any divine contact and dialogue with
man is accomplished through this, be it in a state of being awake or
sleeping".[51]

The demons / spirits assigned to the celestial deities could also be
characterized as these gods' servants.[52] In following Plato the concept
of a protective spirit attached to each single human was developed by
philosophers related to Plato – among these also Aristotle – and by
Stoics as well.[53] This protective spirit or beneficent demon can guide the
soul into Hades like Hermes does.[54]

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47   Hesiodus, opera et dies 121-126.
48   Hesiodus, opera et dies 252-255; cf. Andres, Daimon 282f.
49   Cf. Nußbaum, Geleit 911f.
50   Hesiodus, opera et dies 156-173; Speyer, Heros 862f.
51   Plato, convivium 202e-203a; important also the logos of Lachesis in the final myth in
     Plato's republic (de re publica 10,617e): "Not you will be rescued by (the) daimon,
     but you will choose (the) daimon". Cf. ter Vrugt-Lentz, Geister 613f.
52   Andres, Daimon 283f.
53   Zintzen, Geister 640-647; Nußbaum, Geleit 912f.
54   Platon, de re publica 10,620d. Phaedon 107d-108c; Nußbaum, Geleit 949f.; cf. note 25
     above.

But because there was the concept of subterranean gods as well, one supposed even here that demonic intermediary beings existed – who were sometimes called *angeloi*.[55] Plato already mentions an *angelos* speaking to souls in his myth of the hereafter which he has the Armenian Er narrate.[56] Curses inscribed in Attic tablets invoked subterranean angels.[57] Good and evil demons or spirits effecting welfare and blessing or evil correspond to celestial and subterranean deities. Hermes, who at first was an intermediary between the Olympic gods and the powers in Hades, could become a mere deity of the netherworld besides Ge, Persephone, the Praxidikei, and the Erinyes.[58] A separation of deities and demons / spirits bringing blessing from those effecting evil occurred only within the antique history of ideas, especially because the old religious and magical-religious conceptions were pervaded by moral-religious views. Iranian ideas of metaphysical dualism will also have influenced this process.[59]

The Near East substantially contributed to the genesis of the Greek belief in demons and therewith in angels, too.[60] Already Plutarch reckoned with several possibilities of such an influence. Besides the *magoi* following Zarathustra and the Thracians following Orpheus he also mentions the Egyptians and Phrygians.[61] He is thinking of the early time in Greek history that is probably of the 7th and 6th centuries BC. For this influence we will have to take into account several waves from the Near East following one another. One of these waves was the age of Hellenism and the first Roman emperors. During this epoch a syncretism was produced – also concerning the messengers of heaven and Hades, the good and evil angels; particularly Judaism and furthermore Christianity with its doctrine of good and evil spirits, angels, and Lucifer's train supplied the material for this.[62] Plato and Xenokrates offered already some hints at the doctrine that besides the other elements also the air had its particular creatures, namely the souls of the deceased viz. demons / spirits; later the Stoics elaborated this. This offered an intellectual bridge which was used mainly by the Jewish theologian Philo

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55 Cumont, anges; Andres, Angelos; Michl, Engel 55f.
56 Plato, de re publica 10:619b.
57 Michl, Engel 55f.
58 Preisendanz, Fluchtafel 1-29, especially 6-8.
59 Speyer, Fluchmächte.
60 Michl, Engel 57f.
61 Plutarchus, de oraculorum defectione 10,414F-415A; Bidez / Cumont, mages 16f. (B 5). – For Plutarch's doctrine of demons Zintzen, Geister 644-647.
62 Michl, Engel 57f.; Nußbaum, Geleit 949f.

of Alexandria in the 1st century AD.[63] Probably among his associates the Pseudo-Orphic fragment of a hymn (which was presumably written by some learned Jew) was composed; it praises the cosmic god with these words: "Angels who take a lot of trouble surround your fiery throne; the mortal ones are the subject of their care…".[64] As the centuries after Alexander the Great generally bring about a harmonization and a synthesis of the Greek world and the Near East, this harmonization may be shown also with respect to the divine and demonic messengers.

The theoretical treatment of angels in the "Chaldean Oracles" and in the school of Plotinus is something running beside the main stream of Christianity. Starting from Porphyrius' notes Iamblichos and Proklos produced a doctrine of angels by fusing the respective Greek traditions starting with Hesiod; they also bore in mind, though, Jewish and Christian ideas and doctrines about angels. We cannot present this doctrine of Neoplatonic religious philosophy here.[65]

The Etruscans assimilated their god Turms to Hermes Psychopomos[66]. Etruscan religious ideas concerning the deceased are characterized by male and female winged spirits. In respective illustrations they accompany the souls to the hereafter. They are not punishing demons, but spirits – sometimes carrying scrolls in their hands – which can be interpreted as messengers of death or guides of souls.[67] The winged Tuchulcha is known by name.[68]

Finally we just hint at the idea of the *genius* which scholars are discussing controversially.[69] Probably it means the divine essential vitality inherent in each human being since his procreation and birth.[70] Under Greek influence the *genius* then became the tutelary spirit both in a good and in an evil sense.[71] Correspondences between the Greek *daimon* understood as an attendant of the individual's life and the Roman *genius* and also the guardian angel are most evident.

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63 Heinze, Xenokrates 112f., supposes that Poseidonios is the intermediary. For Poseidonios cf. Zintzen, Geister 642f.; Theiler, Poseidonios 1, 310f.; 2, 316-320 for Poseidonios, De heroibus et daemoniis. – For Philon cf. Maier, Geister 626-640; especially 638.

64 Orphicorum fragmenta 691F Bernabé = 248 Kern; cf. West, Orphic poems 35f. – Michl, Engel 55, has to be emended accordingly.

65 cf. Michl, Engel 58f.; Zintzen, Geister 647-667.

66 Pfiffig, Religio 104f., with illustrations. The representations of winged demons depend on Greek models.

67 Pfiffig, Religio, Reg.: "Damonen, geflügelte".

68 Pfiffig, Religio 334f.

69 Schilling, Genius 53-70.

70 Nußbaum, Geleit 912f.

71 Schilling, Genius 71-75; 76f. on angels of nations and the church.

7. Retrospect

Greeks, Etruscans and Romans have elaborated the idea of beings who are intermediaries between men and the divine world both in texts and iconography. Considering the phenomena in the *kosmos* or the *physis*, *natura* formed the basis for this.[72] At first they were conceived more in the sense of signs than materially. Basically men perceived the world and their relationship to it as a dialogue: the deity reveals itself in the *kosmos* and speaks to men through it; unlike men in modern times who are feeling exposed, man felt included in an all-embracing whole, in the *kosmos* abounding in significance. Divine signs covered the distance between the supernatural-divine existing mysteriously and man; divine messengers as they were described above belonged to these signs.

Summary

The idea of the divine messenger, angelos, permeates Greek, Etruscan and Roman cultures from the beginning to the end. Whereas Iris und Hermes appear as angelos in Homer, in Hesiod we find the first sketch of protective and guiding spirits, who became more elaborate in popular religion and in religious philosophy up to Neoplatonism. We cannot ignore an inner relation between the belief in a personal divine messenger and the divine signs from heaven, like certain birds, signs effected by birds, and the celestial voice. In Rome the idea of the genius is characteristic. We have to take into account that there was influence from the Ancient Near East and from Hellenistic syncretism.

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72   Speyer, Verhältnis.

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II.

Divine Messengers and Mysterious Men in the Patriarchal Narratives of the Book of Genesis*

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1. Phenomena

The word "angel" denotes a heavenly being quite independent from its function. The English term is derived from the Latin word *angelus* which is slightly more specific, since it denotes a messenger of the heavenly sphere in contrast to *nuntius* a word only used for messengers between humans. Neither Greek nor Hebrew makes this terminological distinction.

The Hebrew word for "messenger" (*malʾāḵ*) most likely derives from the root *lʾk* which is not found in the Bible but attested in Ugaritic.[1] The verb means "to send". The noun *malʾāḵ*, however, is attested in Aramaic[2] and in one Phoenician inscription.[3] Just as the Greek ἄγγελος the Hebrew *malʾāḵ* is used for heavenly and earthly messengers.[4] Further it is not always clear whether the messengers in the Bible come from God or whether they are simply human beings. Indeed, "God's angels do not need any wings".[5] Biblical messengers are generally pic-

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1 On the etymology of the word see Greenstein, Equivalency 329ff. For extra-biblical attestations see Cunchillos, Étude, esp. 32-39, and ThWAT IV 888-890.

2 See the Aramaic inscriptions of Sefire (KAI No. 224,8), Dan 3:28; 6:23 as well as one Jewish-Aramaic inscription (cf. DNWSI II, 629).

3 The "messenger of Milk-Astart" in KAI No. 19, 2-3 (222 BCE) is most likely a priest.

4 Cf. Gen 19:1 and texts like 1Kgs 19:5 etc. with passages like Gen 32:4.7; 1Kgs 19:2 etc.

5 Thus the title of a popular book by Claus Westermann published in 1957. Winged divine messengers are first attested in Dan 9:21 (Gabriel) and Rev 14:6. Christian iconography only pictures angels with wings from the 4th century BCE onwards; for Jewish iconography see the representation of Ezek 37 on the murals of the synagogue of Dura Europos.

tured as a man.[6] When a man is finally recognized as an angel, i.e. as a messenger sent by God, he has most likely already vanished. If that is the case the people to whom his message was delivered generally identify him with YHWH himself (Gen 16:13; 22:14) – quite a confusing game.

The Bible knows of other heavenly beings in contact with humanity who are not called *malʾāk̲*. In Gen 18:2-9 we simply read of three men (*ʾnšym*) whom Abraham encounters and to whom he offers hospitality. In the course of the narrative these men are quickly identified as not being from this world. In a similar instance in Gen 32:25 it first seems to be simply a man (*ʾyš*) who wrestles with Jacob.[7] Towards the end of the narrative it becomes apparent that he had wrestled God as the narrator lets the "man" state in v.29.

Normally the messenger who delivers a divine message appears as one individual; however in several passages in the Jacob story we encounter a plurality of heavenly beings who are labelled "messengers of God" (now in the plural).[8] In Gen 28:12 we meet them travelling back and forth between the earthly resting place of Jacob and the heavenly place of YHWH. In Gen 32:3 Jacob identifies the "messengers of God" as camp of the army (?) of God (*mḥnh ʾlhym*). In both instances the heavenly beings are called "messengers" but they do not deliver any message. Rather, they seem to resemble those entities who also appear outside the patriarchal narratives of the Book of Genesis and are generally called "army of YHWH"[9] or are identified with "all the host of heaven standing in attendance to the right and to the left" of God forming the court of the heavenly king in his throne room.[10]

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6   In Josh 5:13, Joshua mistakes the 'general of the army of YHWH' for a soldier. Also it is possible to compare the king with a 'messenger of God' (thus David in 1Sam 19:9; 2Sam 14:15; 19:28). The wife of Menoah, in contrast, describes the angel of YHWH (Judg 13:3) as a 'man of God' and his appearance "looked like an angel of God, very frightening" (v.6). The sacrifice offered to the man of God towards the end of the story, however, is an offering for YHWH.

7   Ezek 9:2 speaks of "six men" carrying tools for destruction in their hands and Ezek 10:2 specifies one of them in more detail. Both, the visionary and the reader of the Book of Ezekiel realize immediately that we deal with heavenly beings here who are sent to execute God's judgement over Jerusalem. In a similar vein, Ezek 40-47 introduces a 'man' who guides the visionary through the new Temple and explains its buildings to him (Ezek 40:3ff.). The clueless Daniel receives the explanation of the vision of ram and billy-goat from somebody who looked like a man (*gbr*) and who is later identified with the angel Gabriel (Dan 8:15ff.; cf. 9:21; other persons in Dan 10:5; 12:5ff.).

8   Outside Genesis such a plurality of divine messengers only appears in Ps 91:11-13; 103:20; 148:2; Job 4:18.

9   Cf. Josh 5:14 with Ps 148:2.

10   See 1Kgs 22:19; the spirit (*rwḥ*) belongs to the same sphere; cf. Job 1-2.

Outside the patriarchal traditions the Bible knows of other beings next to God. Gen 6:1-4 mentions the "sons of God" (*bny hʾlhym*) who unite with the daughters of men. The narrative frame of the Book of Job offers us a rare glimpse into heaven. Here the "sons of God", amongst them Satan, assemble for an audience with the lord of heaven who in turn takes council with his royal court (Job 1:6; 2:1). Some texts place the sons of God next to the stars. In Job 38:7 the sons of God rejoice together with the morning stars in light of the powerful work of God the creator. In other texts they are called "sons of the Most High" (*bny ʿlywn*) and are certainly gods who nevertheless will be judged by the "Most High" (Ps 82).

How can we explain the multi-facetted nature of the phenomena? The phenomenon that we generally call "angel" is rooted in two different perceptions that are connected to two entirely different functions of such beings.[11]

(1) The idea of the "messenger" is shaped mainly by his sending to human beings with a concrete message. Such messengers appear only on earth in the Bible. Within the idea of a messenger the heavenly and earthly sphere overlap significantly so that the messenger first appears as a normal "man". Only the contents of his message reveal that he comes from further away. The term "messenger" simply stresses his function, independent from the person who sends him. Therefore his *Gestalt* oscillates between a heavenly and an earthly being. It is only the syntactical connection "messenger of God" or "messenger of YHWH" that stresses – at least for the reader – that we are dealing with a heavenly entity here. This identification, however, creates a new problem. Since the message of the messenger is first and foremost the message of his master, he simply speaks instead of the person who commissioned him. The "I" of the messenger can no longer be distinguished from the "I" of God.[12] The distinction that is made clear for the reader by the narrator's use of the label "messenger of God" is blurred in the formulation of the message for the person receiving it in the narrative itself. Unlike the reader, this person is unable to recognize at first whether he deals with a human person or with an angel. It is only the remarkable character of the message that hints at the messenger's heavenly origin.

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11   On this see Röttger, Malʾak Jahwe 12-32. On the double background of the biblical view of angels see recently Mach, Entwicklungsstadien 10-64.

12   That the messenger-formula is often missing when a messenger speaks can be neglected, since it is often absent in the few narratives of messengers between humans: it is used in Gen 32:5; Num 20:14; Judg 11:15; 1Kgs 20:3.5 and absent in Num 22:5; Dtn 2:26; 1Sam 6:21; 1Kgs 20:9.10 etc.

(2) Next to the above described phenomenon the Bible knows of heavenly beings surrounding God who is pictured as a king with his court.[13] These beings are serving mainly before God and act almost exclusively in the heavenly sphere. Since humans only encounter these heavenly beings in the context of visions or dreams, i.e. under extraordinary circumstances outside the normal construction of this world the problems connected with the "messenger" are futile. The dreamer or visionary never questions the heavenly provenance of these beings. Satan in the Book of Job or the lying spirit in 1Kgs 22 may be able to influence the events on earth significantly but they never deliver a message. If these heavenly beings speak to the dreamer or visionary they simply explain the dream or the vision – in this respect they differ from the "messengers of God" and their "message". Since these heavenly beings are not sent to the humans to deliver a divine message they are not (yet) called "messengers".

(3) We have several texts that seem to belong to the above mentioned second group but nevertheless use the term "messenger". Apparently the idea of a heavenly council and the idea of a messenger were fused. This is the case in Gen 28:12 and Gen 32:2 but also in the visions of the prophet Zechariah, where the interpreting angel is always called "the messenger who talked with me" (*hmalʾk hdbr by*).[14] We have to differentiate this interpreting angel from the "messenger of YHWH" in Zech 3:1-7 who – as is expected of an angel – speaks to Joshua, albeit in a visionary scene. This explains why the heavenly being is called "messenger of YHWH" here and why he has to be distinguished from the interpretative angel who teaches Zechariah elsewhere.[15]

The quick survey of the phenomena shows that it is quite difficult to distinguish between the function of a messenger sent from a human to a human person and one sent from God to humans as well as between those messengers that God uses to communicate with other heavenly beings. Therefore the term "messenger" can be used for all these aspects. The differentiation is made by using a more detailed terminology such as "messenger of X", "messenger of God / YHWH", and "messenger who talked with me".

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13   On this see Mullen, Council.

14   Zech 1:9.13.14; 2:2.7; 4:1.5; 5:5.10; 6:4.

15   Within the visionary cycle we finally encounter in Zech 1:11-12 a heavenly being, described as 'YHWH's messenger' who communicates with YHWH and with the heavenly horsemen sent by him but *not* with Zechariah as the visionary. The prophet only receives his information from the already mentioned interpretative angel. 'YHWH's messenger' in contrast is a mediatory figure from amongst the heavenly hierarchy. His designation can be explained by his function.

2. Findings

In the traditions of the patriarchal narratives God contacts humans in a variety of ways. Here the distribution of the references is remarkable.

(1) In most cases God does not communicate with humans via a "messenger" or mysterious "men" but talks to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob directly. In texts like Gen 12:1-3; 13:14-17; 22:1-2; 32:3; 35:1 such a communication lacks any specific scenic setting.

(2) In some texts divine speeches are loosely framed by a scenic setting using the verb *rʾh* (ni. "to appear") that stylizes the event as a theophany (Gen 12:7; 17:1-22; 18:1a; 26:2-5.24; 35:9-13).

(3) In other cases God speaks in a vision (Gen 15:1.13; 46:2), in a dream (to Abimelech of Gerar in Gen 20:3; to Jacob [Gen 28:13-15]; to Laban [Gen 31:24]) or via an oracle (to Rebecca [Gen 25:23]).

Not a single reference from these three groups belongs to the substance of an old narrative. This has long been recognized for the grand divine speeches of the Priestly Writing such as Gen 17 and Gen 35:9-13[16] and recently became increasingly obvious for other texts as well. Gen 15 presupposes the Pentateuch.[17] Gen 20 knows at least the first narrative of the endangering of the female ancestor (*Preisgabe der Ahnfrau*) in Gen 12 and propagates a life in a Diaspora setting.[18] Gen 22:1-2 is on a literary level dependent on Gen 12:1. The narrative of the binding of Isaac wrestles with similar problems as the Book of Job;[19] and the disputation between Abraham and YHWH about divine justice in the light of the annihilation of Sodom (Gen 18:22b-33a) already knows of the fall of Jerusalem.[20] The other divine speeches also are relatively young literary formations. The programmatic speech in Gen 12:1-3 is – on a compositional level – closely connected to the speech in Gen 13:14-17: Abraham is here ordered to see the land that God had promised to show him in Gen 12:1.[21] Both speeches are not made at a place of any cultic significance. Therefore it is difficult to grace them with a divine appearance. In Gen 12:1-3 Abraham is still outside the land of Canaan and it is almost logical that the promise of the land that is oriented on "this land" is missing here. The promise is later added at She-

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16 Nöldeke, Untersuchungen 143-44.
17 See Köckert, Vätergott 204-247. Since the original continuation of Gen 13:1 in Gen 18:1 was interrupted by the later insertion of Gen 15 (and Gen 14), Gen 18:1a became necessary (for analysis see Blum, Komposition).
18 Van Seters, Abraham 171-175; Blum, Komposition 405-410; Köckert, Abraham 152-161.
19 Von Rad, Buch 192; Westermann, Genesis 436; Veijola, Opfer 149-162.
20 Schmidt, Deo 143.156-164.
21 Köckert, Vätergott, 250-255.

chem (Gen 12:7). The speech of Gen 13:14-17 offers a detailed location but this location does not correspond to any known place. The peculiar description ("between Bethel in the West and the Ai in the East") indicates an artificial centre of the land exactly on the border between the Northern and Southern Kingdom and makes it apparent that we have a theological geography here.[22] Both speeches together with texts like Gen 28:13-14; Gen 26:2-5.24 and Gen 46:2-4 form the pylons of a literary bridge that links the narratives of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob with each other.[23] In contrast to that Gen 31:3 and Gen 28:15 reference each other and connect the traditions of Jacob.

It is quite striking that YHWH converses directly with the Patriarchs in precisely those parts of the patriarchal narrative that belong to its youngest parts. In the light of the large number of these divine speeches texts that feature divine messengers are relatively sparse:

(4) A "messenger of YHWH" meets Hagar in the wilderness (Gen 16:7-11) and an angel of God calls Abraham from heaven (Gen 22:11-12.15-16). In a similar vein a messenger of YHWH calls Hagar (Gen 21:17) and speaks to Jacob in his dream (Gen 31:11). Finally Jacob blesses the sons of Joseph by calling upon "the messenger who has redeemed me from all harm" (Gen 48:16).

(5) A group of God's messengers appears to Jacob in a dream during his flight from Esau in Gen 28:12 and he meets them again upon his return (Gen 32:23).

(6) We have to add those mysterious men who are hosted first by Abraham and then by Lot (Gen 18-19). Equally it is a "man" who wrestles Jacob at Jabbok and who blesses him at dawn (Gen 32:23-33). The brief reminiscence of the Jacob narrative in Hos 12:4-5 makes it clear that Jacob did not simply wrestle with a "messenger" (of God) who replaced YHWH but never brought a message.

3. Heavenly Beings in the Jacob Tradition

(1) In the oldest kernel of the Jacob tradition the patriarch meets twice a group of "messengers of God". Both encounters form significant turning points in the larger narrative context. The first meeting happened when Jacob leaves the land to seek asylum and protection from Esau at

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22   Cf. the descriptions of the border in the Book of Joshua. According to Josh 16:1-3 and Josh 18:12-13 the border between Ephraim and Benjamin (that belongs to the Southern kingdom) runs along the line of Jericho – Bethel – Luz – Ataroth. Following this course, the place is to be located between Bethel and Ai.

23   Köckert, Vätergott 320-321.

his uncle's place (Gen 28:12); the second meeting occurs during his return when he re-enters the land after the border treaty with Laban (Gen 32:2-3).

Gen 28 is the result of a long and complex literary history. Here, Gen 28:(10.)11-13a*.16-19a form an older narrative describing the discovery of the cultic place of Bethel.[24] This discovery is connected via the vow in Gen 28:20-21a.22 to the Jacob cycle in such a way that it now pictures Israel's forefather fleeing from the wrath of his brother Esau. During his first night in foreign lands he "comes upon a certain place (*pgᶜ bmqwm*)" where the heavens open up to him. In his dream he sees a stairway that connects heaven and earth.[25] On this stairway the "messengers of God" (*mlʾky ʾlhym*) are going up and down. Above it, however, God is standing in heaven. When he awakes, Jacob realizes: "Surely YHWH is present in this place and I did not know it." Shaken he continues: "This is none other than the abode of God (*ʾyn zh ky ʾm-byt ʾlhym*) and this is the gateway to heaven (*wzh šᶜr hšmym*)". Therefore he calls this place (*wyqrʾ ʾt šm hmqwm hhwʾ*) Beth-El, "House of God".

The main contours of the older etiology for the sanctuary are still recognizable. The God whom Jacob encounters is pictured in heaven; heaven, however, is opened up at Bethel. This opening is described by the stairway whose "top reached to the sky" (*wrʾšw mgyᶜ hšmymh*). The heavenly beings are not "messengers of God" for nothing, even though they do not relay a message: their presence indicates the continuous encounter between YHWH in the heavens and the earth at this special place. Through them the god YHWH is present at Bethel. "God's messengers" are heavenly beings, i.e. members of another world and therefore – just as the God they serve – normally invisible. Jacob, however, Israel's forefather is allowed a glance at this other world and he can, for a little while, view this invisible heavenly reality. Therefore, the patriarch reacts properly when he erects a pillar of stone and pours oil on top of it, thus founding a sanctuary. The sanctuary is the place where heaven and earth meet.

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24 The divine speech with its far-reaching promises (Gen 28:13a₂b-14[15]) already knows the patriarchal triad and its content moves beyond the narrow defines of the Jacob tradition. The speech is – like Gen 12:1-3; 13:14-17 – the literary product of a late stage of the composition of the patriarchal narrative. For analysis see Blum, Komposition 7-35.

25 The Hebrew word *sullām* is connected to Akkadian *simmiltu* (AHw 1045a; Mankowski, Loanwords 114-18) and describes a ramp with stairs that also occurs on the myth of Nergal and Ereshkigal (see below under 5. English text in Foster, Muses 506-524; Akkadian text in STT 28 *īnâ Namtar arkat simmelat šamā*[*mi*] (V:42); [*ūrid Ne*]*rgal arkat simmelat šamāmi* (VI:18).

Within the context of Jacob's flight the scene reaches a significance that moves beyond the older etiology for a sanctuary. Now, the narrative places Jacob's travels in foreign lands under the special protection of the God whose presence he experienced at Bethel. The messengers of God can probably be best compared to the angel of God who travels before Abraham's servant and paves his way during his difficult task of acquiring a bride (Gen 24:7.40).[26] On the youngest stratum of the dream narrative "God's messengers" function as the visualizing aspect of the invisible but powerful divine escort. "And behold, I will be with you; I will protect you wherever you go and will bring you back to this land ..." (Gen 28:15). This statement not only encompasses the Jacob tradition as a whole but also – via Gen 28:15b – the complete patriarchal narrative at a very young stage. With Vvrse 15 the messengers of God in Genesis 28 are transformed into guardian angels.

Similarly to his flight, also during his return do angels play an important role. *Gen 32:2b-3* is in its formulations closely connected to Gen 28.[27] Immediately after his treaty with Laban in Gilead, Jacob is again in his home territory.[28] Here, he encounters "messengers of God" (*mlʾky ʾlhym*) who meet him this time (*pgʿ b*). After Jacob has recognized the angel he interprets the place as "God's camp" and calls it (*wyqrʾ šm hmqwm hhwʾ*) Mahanaim, i.e. "double camp". The little scene serves as a linguistic and thematic prelude to the following events of the closure of the Jacob narrative:[29] God's messengers reappear in the messengers of Jacob (Gen 32:4.7), the camp of God (Mahanaim) is taken up in the two (!) camps of Jacob (*mḥnwt*, Gen 32:8.9.11.22); they, in turn, are linked to the gifts for Esau (*mnḥh*, Gen 32:14.19.21.22; 33:10). The scene in Gen 32:2b-3 is neither to be regarded as an etiology for a sanctuary,[30] nor as an originally independent piece but rather as a short note that was created for the larger narrative context in the light of the Bethel narrative (Gen 28:11ff.) and now serves as its parallel in the final verses of the Jacob tradition.[31]

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26 See also the 'guardian angel' in Ps 91:11. m. Ber. Rab. LXVIII (Wünsche, 333) Rashi, Bamberger, 77 and Jacob, Buch 580, assume for Gen 28 two kinds of angels: 'angels of home' who ascend into heaven, because Jacob leaves his country and 'angels of foreign lands' who descend to accompany him on his flight. This exegesis pays tribute to the fact that the angels first ascend – a narrative trait that is generally neglected by scholars.

27 See Jacob, Buch 629; von Rad, Buch 256; Fokkelman, Art 198.

28 According to Josh 13:26.30; 21:38; 2Sam 2:8-10; 1Kgs 4:14 Mahanaim belongs to the East-Jordanian territory of the northern Kingdom of Israel.

29 Blum, Komposition 141.

30 Against Houtman, Jacob.

31 See Römer, Genèse 190.

This, however, does not imply that the scene is dispensable for the composition. Especially its allusions to Gen 28 create a setting of a heavenly welcome of the returnee by the messengers of God.[32] In the older tradition of the discovery of the cultic place of Bethel, Jacob discovers the place by chance, while in Gen 32 the meeting is instigated by the heavenly messengers themselves. By their presence alone they assure Jacob of God's presence and his protection before his disconcerting meeting with his betrayed brother Esau. As was the case at Bethel, the message does not require any words.

(2) The findings in *Gen 32:1-16* are slightly more complicated. The whole scene presupposes on the one hand the preceding narrative of the miraculous increase of Jacob's flock in Gen 30:25-43 and expands on it. On the other hand the focus of the narrative changes since God is introduced into it which results in a theological interpretation. This implies that already its earliest version is younger than Gen 30:25-43.[33] Twice Jacob receives the order to return, once in v.3 and once in v.11-13.

In Gen 31:3 YHWH orders his return without any preparation or scenic introduction: "Return (*šwb*) to the land of your father (*ʾrṣ ʾbwtyk*) and to your relatives (*mwldtk*)! I will be with you (*ʾhyh ʿmk*)." YHWH's escort guarantees success. This order to return interrupts the flow of the narrative and the transition from v.1-2 to v.4-5 and spoils the climax of the second order to return in v.11-13. At the same time the order corresponds to the youngest layer of the divine promise at Bethel (Gen 28:15) as several catch-words indicate: "Behold I am with you (*ʾnky ʿmk*). I will protect you wherever you go and will bring you back (*šwb* hif.) to this land (*hʾdmh hzʾt*) ..." Apparently, Gen 31:3 belongs to an interpretative reworking that, from the beginning, places every action of the patriarch under the authority of divine commands – in this respect it is close to other commanding speeches of YHWH (see above under 2.1).

The other order to return in Gen 31:11-13 is properly staged. Here it is not YHWH who speaks but his messenger and Jacob receives his message during a dream. The answer of Jacob's wives in Gen 31:16b can only refer to this speech: "Now then, do just as God (!) has told you." The speech of the divine messenger in Gen 31:11-13 represents after Gen 28 the decisive hinge of the Jacob tradition. Most likely the

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32 The place name Mahanaim is primary against the etiology of the name; therefore an explanation of the dual is not required by the scenic setting.

33 Correctly Blum, Komposition 121-132, cf. also Kratz, Composition 266-267.

speech followed immediately after v.9 and was only later expanded.[34]
Its original form was as follows:

11   And in the dream the messenger of God said to me: Jacob! Here I am, I
      answered.
12   And he said: ...[35]
13   I am the God (who is in) Bethel,[36]
      where you have anointed a Mazzebe and
      where you made a vow to me.
      Now arise and leave this land and
      return to your native land.

The speech refers back explicitly to the theophany of YHWH in Gen
28:12-13a*, the setting up and anointing of a Mazzebe (Gen 28:18), the
naming of the place (Gen 28:19) and the vow of Jacob (Gen 28:22). On
the level of the overall composition of the Jacob tradition, the "messen-
ger of God" in Gen 31:11-13 is no one else than YHWH himself who
appeared to the patriarch at Bethel and who is now in the process of
helping him to return safely to the house of his father (Gen 28:21a).
Already the introduction of the messenger stresses this identification
and v.3 as a divine speech fits well to this identification. He is a "mes-
senger" in as much since the God who appeared to Jacob at Bethel is
now speaking to him (Gen 31:11-13). On the level of Jacob as a person
of a (larger) narrative the divine messenger in v.11 is a messenger of
God to whom the patriarch owes – according to v.9 – his wealth and his
flock and whom he calls in v.5 "God of my father". On this narrative
level, the "messenger of God" is a member of the numinous staff of the
family's religion and a protective deity.

    (3) *Gen 32:23-33** is probably the text of the highest theological pro-
fundity for our topic as well as its darkest proponent.[37] It is not a divine

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34   Immediately before the revelation in a dream by God's messenger we have in v.10
     another, conflicting dream; here Jacob sees how his flock increased despite several
     attempts by Laban to prevent this. Furthermore the dream introduces a different
     colouring (*brdym* instead of *tlʾym*). Since dreams in Antiquity were generally under-
     stood as divine pronouncements, v.10 interprets Jacob's statements of v.9 that it was
     God himself and not Jacob using dubious shepherd's tricks (Gen 30:37-43) who
     snatched the flock from Laban and gave it to Jacob.

35   A later author identifies the dreams of v.10 and v.12 with each other and adds the
     miraculous increase of Jacob's flock to the second dream where such a statement was
     originally missing. It now interrupts the address and the self-presentation of the di-
     vine messenger.

36   In the difficult construction *hʾl bytʾl* it is impossible to regard *bytʾl* as a divine name.
     Rather it must refer to place as is indicated by the following relative clauses with the
     particle *šm*. The construction is probably best explained as an abbreviated clause (i.e.
     "the God, [the one who is in] Bethel"; cf. GesK §127) or, following Brockelmann,
     Syntax §82, as an adverbial construction. LXX interprets accordingly and reads "the
     one who has appeared to you in Bethel"; cf. also Tg. Onqelos and Tg. Ps-Jonathan.

messenger but "a man" (*ʾyš*) who attacks Jacob in the darkness of the night and who wrestles him at Jabbok. As soon as the attacker realizes that he is unable to overwhelm (*lʾ ykl*) Jacob, he injures him at his hip (Gen 32:26a). Exegetes often tend to solve the problem of the text by identifying the anonymous man with a demon.[38] The continuation of the narrative, however, makes such an identification difficult to sustain, since demons tend not to give a blessing. Who, then, is the mysterious man in Gen 32:23-33?

In the light of Hos 12:5a and the Jewish exegesis of the passage from Targum Neofiti I to Benno Jacob one is tempted to identify the man with an angel. Gen 32, however, moves beyond such an interpretation. The anonymous man gives Jacob a new name, calling him Israel, and justifies the new name with the fight that had just happened: "For you have striven (*śrh*) with God (!) and with humans and you have prevailed (*ykl*)" (Gen 32:29).[39] This corresponds to the naming of the place by Jacob: "so Jacob called the place Penuel, (saying), 'For I have seen God[40] face to face and yet my life is preserved'" (Gen 32:31). The narrator was obviously of the opinion that Jacob had wrestled no other than God himself.[41] Jacob himself realizes that too as the naming of the place in Gen 32:31 indicates. Jacob either realized during the fight itself or later after the unknown man refuses to reveal his name (cf. Judg 13:17-18) that he does not deal with a mortal here but with his God. Therefore he clings to this superhuman opponent: "I will not let you go unless you bless me" (Gen 32:27b). So, the trickster becomes the blessed divine warrior Israel. The change of the name indicates his new nature. After this encounter with God that encompassed life and death and during which Jacob prevailed he is able to encounter his cheated

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37 The text is not an individual saga (against Gunkel, Noth and others) but a scene constructed for the current literary context. It is difficult to argue for a pre-Israelite provenance of the text. The kernel of the scene is to be found in Gen 32:23.25b.26a. 27-30.31(?).32; for literary analysis and further bibliography see Köckert, Gegner 167-174.

38 On the problems of such identification see Köckert, Gegner 161-166.

39 Köhler / Baumgartner, Lexicon 380b gives as basic meaning for *ykl* 'to endure', 'to comprehend', 'to be able', 'to prevail'. Such a translation in Gen 32:29 (and Hos 12:5a) is supported by the absolute use of the verb. Elliger, Jacobskampf 166, stresses that the verb does not express more than the objective fact that Jacob remained 'on top of things' as he has done or will do in the other conflicts with fellow humans and that he is even able to do so when God himself brings him close to the verge of disaster.

40 Here it is impossible to translate *ʾlhym* as heavenly beings and place them in opposition to earthly beings; an interpretation that may be possible for v.29.

41 After a careful analysis Spieckermann, Gotteskampf 19, arrives at the same conclusion.

brother Esau and can look him in the eye "like seeing the face of God"
(Gen 33:10).[42]

Israel was born in a battle with the divine – no other people has told
of its beginnings in such a dramatic way. The divine name, YHWH, is
not mentioned in the narrative. Its revelation is refused explicitly in
v.30. Superficially this is done because of the dramaturgy of the narra-
tive that requires an incognito of the attacker. A combat between the
ancestor of Israel and YHWH, the God of Israel transcends the sayable
possibilities.

A bold interpreter in *Hos 12* drew further consequences from this.
He takes up and conflates large portions of the Jacob-cycle including
the priestly passages and provides his readers with a surprising exege-
sis.[43] From the etiology of Israel in Gen 32:29b an early Midrash in Hos
12:4-5a takes up the combat with God (*śrh 'm 'lhym*) as well as Jacob's
prevailing (*ykl*) but defuses its *Vorlage* in Hos 12:5a by transforming the
combat with God into a combat[44] with an angel (*wyśr 'l ml'k*).[45] As far
as the exegesis is concerned the text remains faithful to its *Vorlage* in as
much as the use of the word "angel" takes into account that it was a
"man" whom Jacob encountered at Jabbok (Gen 32:25b). The equation
of "man" = "angel" is possibly derived from Gen 18-19. Be it as it may,
here the angel represents God on earth. Especially the following an-
thropomorphic statements in v.5 that explain Gen 32:27 were regarded
as too outrageous as to relate them to God. "The other had to weep and
to implore him" could be said of an angel but certainly not of God.[46]
The modern interpretation of the attacker as a demon follows this line
of thought.

(4) In the Jacob tradition an angel occurs for the last time in the
blessing of Ephraim and Manasseh in *Gen 48:15-16*. The *ml'k* is not
specified here. The parallelism with the two proceeding parts indicates,
however, that he is a representative of God. Jacob leads his life "before

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42   On the manifold contextual allusions that give the scene its depth of field see Blum,
     Komposition 140-150 and Spieckermann.

43   See here Pfeiffer, Heiligtum 68-100.

44   Due to the Masoretic vocalisation the verb is usually derived from the root *śrr* 'to rule'. In
     light of the following *ykl* and its rendering in LXX and α' *śrh* is more likely (HAL,
     1354).

45   The change in preposition over against the *Vorlage* (*'m*) and in contrast to Hos 12:4b
     (*'t*) can probably be best explained that Hos 12:5a aimed at creating an even closer
     analogy to the name "Israel" by formulating *yśr'l*.

46   Until today it is detested who serves as the subject to these verbs in Hos 12:5a and
     whether they refer to Gen 32:27a (God in the *Gestalt* of the man) or to Gen 32:27b
     (Jacob). As far as the context is concerned both possibilities make sense. The view
     put forward here follows Pfeiffer, Heiligtum 86-88.

God"; it is, however, not God but his angel who intervenes in his life: it is he who redeems and protects from harm. The blessing belongs to a late stage of the tradition and was – as its introduction shows – originally intended for Joseph.[47] The older two-partite predication of God in verses 15 and 16a was later expanded by a third one. The formulations of the blessing are unusual for the patriarchal narratives. The first expression "the God in whose ways my fathers walked" takes up Gen 17:1 (P) and Gen 24:40 (post-P) and the third already knows of the metaphoric use of the legal term *gʾl* ("to redeem") for God,[48] but uses it for "the angel who has redeemed me from all harm" (*rʿ*). Unfortunately it remains unclear to what the redeeming refers. Gen 31:7 is closest here: "God, however, would not let him (= Laban) do me any harm (*rʿʿ* hif.). The *mlʾk* in Gen 48:16 is not a messenger but God's representative who does to Jacob what he ascribes to YHWH in Gen 31:7.

4. Heavenly Beings in the Abraham-Tradition

(1) Of the relevant texts *Gen 18* has the most prominent reception history in Christianity and more specifically in Eastern Christianity. The visitation of the three man in Abraham's tent was understood from a very early date onwards as a depiction of the trinity.[49] Here the representation of the Trinity on the icon painted by Andrej Rubljov in 1410 is especially famous.[50] It was, however, never the intention of the biblical narrator to interpret the visit of the three men in Gen 18 as a Trinitarian event.

This becomes clear if one looks at the distribution of the different terms for the heavenly beings in *Gen 18-19*. Before doing so we have to evaluate the connection of both chapters to a single narrative unit within the framework of a larger overall composition.[51] The oldest liter-

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47 See Schöpflin, Jakob 511ff.

48 In the Pentateuch this concept only occurs in Exod 6:6; 15:13 but see the polemics against a redemption by only an angel in Is 63:9.

49 See the classic formulations of Augustine: *et ipse Abraham tres vidit, unum adoravit* and *nonne unus erat hospes in tribus qui venit ad patrem Abraham*. Cf. also the fresco in S. Maria Maggiore (Rome, 4th century CE) and further evidence in LCI I, 532 and plate 3.

50 The icon shows three – apart from their different garments – identical men with wings, halo and staff seated around a table that is decorated with a filled bowl. Today the icon is housed in the Tretjakow gallery in Moscow. The Moscow Synod of 1551 gave the icon quasi canonical status by decreeing that it should serve as model for any representation of the Trinity in Russian icon painting.

51 On the overall composition of the Abraham-Lot-narrative (Gunkel) see Blum, Komposition 273-289, and for Gen 18:1-16 see Köckert, Vätergott 235-238. More compli-

ary stratum can be found in a diptych: both parts of it complement each other but are nevertheless shaped in contrast to each other and are connected by the course of the day.[52] During the first part of the narrative the heavenly beings visit Abraham unrecognized at noon. He pays honour to them in front of his tent without knowing to whom he plays the host. As way of saying thank you the hosts announce the birth of a son (Gen 18:1b-16[53]). The second part is set in Sodom at night. Lot also offers hospitality by inviting the foreign men into his house. Here they say thank you by saving him and his family from the city-mob and the descending divine judgement of Sodom (Gen 19:1-27a.28[54]). The first part refers to the birth of Isaac. The root *ṣḥq* in Gen 18:12-15 as well as the note on his birth in Gen 21:1-6 that has now replaced the older closure of the overall composition alludes to this frequently. The second part, in contrast, ends in the darkness of a cave (Gen 19:30-38). Isaac is a present of the heavenly beings while Moab and Ammon are the product of an incestuous encounter. Right from the beginning, the larger narrative context has a global perspective. The focus is the origin of Israel and her Eastern neighbours. Here Gen 18:16b.20-22a.33b form the necessary narrative bridge that links both parts.[55] The verses prepare for the Sodom part of the narrative that could not exist without the Mamre part and this bridge.[56] Gen 19 has incorporated different material but it is impossible to separate any single scene.[57]

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cated solutions of the literary problems are offered by Levin, Jahwist 153-170, and Kratz, Composition 270-272, who argues for an independent Lot tradition in Gen 19 as the focal point.

52   Gen 18:1b (Noon); 19:1a (evening); 19:5 (night); 19:15 (dawn); 10:23 (sunrise); 19:27 (early in the morning); 13:33 (during this night); 19:34 (on the following day); 19:35 (during this night).

53   Gen 18:1b cannot have been the original continuation of Gen 18:1a because it would then be YHWH who sits in front of his tent. Gen 18:1a became necessary after Gen 18 was separated as a continuation from its original reference text (Gen 13:1-18*). Gen 13:18 mentions Abraham who sits in the place that Gen 18:1a refers to.

54   Gen 19:27b presupposes the later addition of the legal dispute between Abraham and YHWH about God's justice in Gen 18:22b-33a; this passage in turn cannot be separated from YHWH's reflection in Gen 18:17-19. Gen 19:29 belongs to P.

55   Thus already Wellhausen, Composition 25-26, in his analysis.

56   Blum, Komposition 280, has shown conclusively that already the exposition of the narrative in Gen 19:1-3 is dependent on the narrative set in Mamre.

57   This is definitively true for the events in Sodom (Gen 19:4-11) that are formulated with knowledge of the material used in Judg 19 (in a similar vein Gen 18:1-15 presupposes the narrative structure of 2Kgs 4). The scene realizes Gen 18:21, since YHWH has not yet given a final judgement on Sodom here (in contrast to Gen 18:17.23-33). Thus Gen 19:4-11 demonstrates whether Sodom "has done altogether according to the outcry" (cf. Gen 18:21a with Gen 19:4b.13). Also the Zohar episode cannot be expunged since Gen 19:30-38 depends on it. The arguments for a separa-

The change between YHWH and the three men, between the three men and the two messengers as well as the transition from plural to singular verbs connected to it has provoked manifold confusion. The whole exegetical tool-box has been used on it.[58] With regard to the main structure of the larger narrative context in Gen 18-19 the solution proposed by Erhard Blum seems to do the most justice to the oscillating text.[59] The introduction of the three men instead of YHWH allows the narrator to keep YHWH at first incognito. This is part of the peculiarity of narratives describing heavenly visitors on earth.[60] In Gen 18 YHWH is both: a member of the three (v.3) and he appears as the three men (v.1.9.10); during the announcement of the birth of Isaac, however (v.10-15), the text only mentions him. Nevertheless, to maintain YHWH's incognito as a single man would have been enough (as is the case, for example, in Gen 32:23ff.). Most likely, the mentioning of three men seems to have been a reminiscence to a pre-Israelite local tradition rooted in Hebron. The basis for such an interpretative model is, however, relatively small.[61] The circumstances in Ugarit are little clearer: in the mythological texts messengers often appear in pairs (see below under 5.). If this concept also forms the background of Gen 18 the three men, then, must have always been shaped as YHWH with two of his messengers whose messenger activity was never activated. Both explanations do not have to exclude each other: an early stage of Gen 18 is rooted in the local tradition of a triad at Hebron while the expanded version of the larger narrative interprets this concept as YHWH and his two messengers.

After the visit to Abraham all three men move on to Sodom in the older version of the larger narrative. As was the case in Gen 18:3.10-15, also in Gen 19 YHWH emerges occasionally as one of the three men.[62]

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tion can only be explained with the nature of the narrative material but not be used as a literary-critical criteria.

58 On the history of scholarship see Letellier, Day, 1-29. The most recent confusion can be viewed and read in Fabry, Warum. Fabry discovers a basic layer (*Grundschicht*) with the theme of "theoxeny" that does not even have a point.

59 Blum, Komposition 277-282.

60 See Judg 6:11-24; 13:2-24 and the parallels from Greek antiquity in Gunkel's commentary.

61 Possibly, this can be concluded from Num 13:22; Josh 15:14; Judg 1:10, i.e. texts that report the names of three children of Anak associated with Hebron. These children were probably worshipped there as heroes (in Num 13:33 the Anakites appear as *Nephilim*; in Deut 2:10-11; 2:20-21 they are called *Rephaim*). Divine triads are known from elsewhere in Syro-Palestine (see the evidence in Müller, Gott 128-132, that needs, however, to be assessed critically).

62 Cf. Gen 19:3bα.14.16. Also the speaker in Gen 19:17 (MT) is a single individual (LXX, Peshitta and Vulgate read the plural here) whom Lot answers in such a way in v.18

He is the subject of the decisive moments of the narrative. It is he who announces the birth of the son Isaac (Gen 18:10-15) and he is responsible for the destruction of Sodom (Gen 19:23-25).

The differentiation between YHWH and the "men" allows – apart from the obvious incognito – to realize something like a divine ubiquity on a narrative level and – with the participation of divine beings – to construct a synchronic sequence of events, even though one was only able to narrate these things one after the other. All this happens in the version expanded by Gen 18:17-19.22b-33a. Originally all three men moved to Sodom; now Abraham engages YHWH in a discussion about the justice of the judge of the earth in the light of the destruction of an entire city. The reader, therefore, has to relate the "men" who "turned from there, and went towards Sodom" (Gen 18:22a) silently to the other two men, since YHWH remains standing before Abraham.[63] The expanded version accounted for this in Gen 19, too, and explained the relationship between YHWH and the other two men in such a way that the text adds "the two messengers" in Gen 19:1(.25) and states more precisely to whom the plural forms – that originally referred to all three men – relate. Furthermore Gen 19:13b explicitly adds that they were sent by YHWH. Since Gen 19:1 now defines the men who went to Sodom as messengers the readers must relate "the men" in Gen 19:10.12.16 and the corresponding plurals in Gen 19:17 ("When they had brought them outside") and Gen 19:18 ("And Lot said to them") to these messengers. Consequently, the Samaritan Pentateuch in Gen 19:12 and the Septuagint in Gen 19:16 identify these men explicitly as "messengers". This identification for the passages seemed logical for both v.12-13 and v.16 since YHWH is mentioned explicitly next to the men. By dividing the three men into YHWH and two messengers the narrator is able to create a simultaneous sequence of events: two messengers visit Lot and at the same time Abraham argues with YHWH about the fate of the just men during the judgement of Sodom.

However, where is YHWH *after* the discussion with Abraham? Gen 18:33a simply states: "And YHWH went his way ..." Where exactly he went is not said. His destination only becomes clear during the destruction of Sodom in Gen 19:24. Here the biblical text is confusing and redundant: "And YHWH rained on Sodom and Gomorrah sulphur and fire from YHWH out of Heaven". The last four words seem clumsy and

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that the Masoretes were able to relate *ʾăḏōnāy* to YHWH (cf. Gen 18:3!). According to MT he must then be also the speaker of v.21-22.

63   In Gen 18:22b scribes reversed subject and object (see *app. crit.* of BHS), because they understood 'standing before' as 'standing in service before ...' and this was impossible to do for YHWH.

do not yield any new information.[64] This is, however, not the case if one understands "from heaven" as an intended detailed localization of YHWH.[65] Then, the not very elegantly added remark discloses where YHWH has to be located after his departure in Gen 18:33a: he is not with Lot's family on their way to Zohar but in heaven. In the expanded version of the narrative a personal encounter with YHWH, the God of Israel, is reserved exclusively for Abraham. According to this perspective, the single person who speaks in Gen 19:17-22 with Lot is no longer YHWH but one of the two men who – as his messengers – accompany Lot and his two daughters on their flight from the doomed city. YHWH enters the stage again at dawn but he is now in heaven (v.23-25) and rains sulphur and fire on the cities of proverbial godlessness.

The "three men" who visit Abraham belong to the religious heritage of Hebron from the dim and distant past. The Judean narrator of monarchic times uses this heritage to describe how Abraham the patriarch experienced YHWH's reality on earth. This experience, like any other true divine experience, is the experience of a mystery. There are few biblical narratives that stress this fact so clearly as this one that conceals God's presence in three men simultaneously. The extended version from Persian times explicitly locates YHWH in heaven but does not confine him to it. On earth, however, we encounter him as "man" in an earthly and therefore puzzling appearance. The use of the concept of divine messengers explains the relationship between YHWH and "the men". In contrast to the first version of the narrative, YHWH only appears to Abraham. Lot as a non-Israelite only meets his messengers.

(2) *Gen 16* also narrates an encounter of a messenger of YHWH with a foreigner, who is described in Gen 16:1b as a female Egyptian slave whose place of origin could have been deduced from Gen 12:6.[66] In the course of the narrative we encounter in few verses, the messenger of YHWH, YHWH himself and God next to each other. This juxtaposition can be explained best by taking the different levels of communication into account.

While Hagar is a fugitive from her mistress Sarah she is found by the "messenger of YHWH" near a Wadi in the wilderness where he

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64 Keel, Sodom explains the origin of the material by attributing the destruction of Sodom to a Sun-God; this interpretation is highly likely since the judgement commences at dawn. The last four words are then used to make sure that it is YHWH who fulfils the attributes of the Sun-God. This may be the case for the pre-history of the material but it does not explain why the localization "from heaven" is used.

65 In other texts of the Hebrew Bible where God lets sulphur and fire either come over humans (Ezek 38:22) or rains it (Ps 11:6) the localization "from heaven" is missing.

66 The narrative is hardly a single unity. Against the common opinion (Gunkel, Westermann) only Gen 16:3.16 can be attributed to P.

speaks to her (v.7-8). From the following verses (v.9-11) that all start with the same introductory formula only v.11 relates to Hagar's situation. V.9 disapproves of her flight, even though it seemed acceptable to v.11, and prepares for v.15 that anticipates her return. Both verses were added here after Gen 21:8ff. was inserted into the Abraham narrative and one had to take this in Gen 16 into account.[67] Gen 16:10 is probably even younger since this promise moves far beyond the situation of Hagar and renders the following announcement of a son superfluous.[68] Originally the narrative continued after v.8 in v.11. After the messenger learned of Hagar's whence and where he announces to the pregnant woman the birth of a son whom she shall call "Ishmael". The interpretation of the name that follows refers to Hagar's situation and takes the first part of the name into account but does not fit with the name's theophoric element ʾl. The secondary addition of this interpretation becomes apparent if one scrutinizes the difficult connection of v.12: here the pronoun hwʾ refers back to the name but it cannot be connected with its explanation. The reference to the future fate of the child in the form of a birth oracle (cf. Gen 25:23) or a tribal proverb did not know the interpretation of the name with a reference to YHWH who had heard of Hagar's misery (cf. Exod 3:7).

Therefore Hagar's reaction to the speech of the messenger in v.13-14 is very surprising.[69] The reader knows since Gen 16:7 that it was the messenger of YHWH who found the fugitive in the wilderness but Hagar does not have this knowledge. She simply saw a man who inquired after her fate. Towards the end of the episode she identifies the man, who "spoke to her", with God (ʾl) because of his wonderful announcement: "You are a God of seeing ..."[70] The narrator, however, knows that it was simply the messenger of YHWH. Therefore he intro-

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67   Gen 16:15 opposes the order of Gen 16:11 where Hagar and not Abraham shall name the child. V.15 most likely pushed aside the original note of the birth in a move to reconcile with Gen 21.

68   Furthermore Gen 16:10 combines the late promises of Gen 22:17 and Gen 32:12 and is therefore formulated as a divine speech – something that is not motivated by the context of Gen 16.

69   Both verses contain numerous problems which we cannot solve here (see the recent proposals by Knauf, Ismael 45-49; Koenen, Textgeschichte 468-474, and Irsigler, Erhörungsmotiv 121-124). It has been proposed from time to time to separate the verses from the original narrative (von Seters, Abraham 193; Knauf, Ismael 26f.) but the narrative needs an identifying reaction of Hagar. Then the well can only be named after v.13. The tension between the name Ishmael ("God has heard") and the reaction of Hagar that stresses God's seeing and the name of the well cannot be pursued here.

70   The easiest way to explain the phrase is to follow LXX that translates "God who sees me". On the phrase ʾl rʾy see Köckert, Vätergott 76-77.

duces Hagar's thankful profession in Gen 16:13a as a praise of the name of YHWH. At least the narrator did not understand the singular stroke of fate as an independent divinity but sees in it a title of YHWH.

Gen 16 distinguishes between YHWH and the messenger in such a way that YHWH is aware of Hagar but only takes care of her via his messenger who speaks to her. The messenger replaces God in the human realm. Since God is present in the message of the messenger, Hagar is able to interpret her encounter as an encounter with God.

(3) The second narrative about Hagar (*Gen 21:8-21*) presupposes in its current *Gestalt* the first Hagar episode of Gen 16.[71] The text belongs to a new and expanded edition of the Abraham tradition from Persian times.[72] The relationship between God and his messenger has not changed but the distance between God's messenger and humans has grown significantly.

Gen 21:8-21 is even less a family narrative or episode than Gen 16. Gen 21:10 uses two verbs to describe the conflict and its solution that are of pivotal significance for Israel's relationship to the land: "to drive out" (*grš*) and "to inherit" (*yrš*). On the level of national history the inheritance is the land. In Gen 21:12 the narrator puts the answer who is going to be the legitimate heir of this inheritance and what shall happen to the others into God's mouth. If the land is regarded as a certain quality of salvation there is little room for compromises in questions regarding its possession. If only one can inherit, the others have to leave the inheritance. Gen 21, however, notes explicitly that God is not only with the heirs but also with the exiles as the narrator stresses in v.20 in regard to the boy (Ishmael). Even more, the promise to Abraham to become a great nation (Gen 12:2) does not only refer to Isaac but also to "the son of the slave-woman" (Gen 21:13).

In the second part of the narrative Gen 21 uses – just like Gen 16 – the verbs "to see" and "to hear" but shifts their accentuation. God in heaven hears the cry of the exiled boy (Gen 21:17). He opens Hagar's eyes so that she will find water (Gen 21:19). But he only speaks to Abraham directly (Gen 21:12-13). With the exiled Hagar he simply communicates via his messenger. In contrast to Gen 16 God's messenger does not go and look for Hagar; like God himself he is in heaven and has to call upon her from there. Therefore his speech is a heavenly speech and recognized as such from the beginning. On the one hand the messenger tells Hagar that God has heard the cry of the boy (Gen 21:17b). Here he is distinguished from God. On the other hand he an-

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71   Cf. Blum, Komposition 311-320.
72   Thus with different arguments Levin, Jahwist 177; Kratz, Composition 260; Köckert, Geschichte 119.125.

nounces to her in the form of a divine speech what God's plans for the boy are (Gen 21:18): "I will make a great nation of him". The change in person takes up the direct address to Abraham in Gen 21:13 and can therefore literary-critically not be queried. Here, the messenger of God appears as God himself. God communicates with humans, be it directly or indirectly via his messengers, only from heaven. His messenger is transformed in a pure heavenly being that no longer replaces God on earth. Thus the differentiation between God and his messenger has lost its original intention but (still) enables a differentiation between different levels of communication: God talks to Abraham but his messenger with Hagar.

(4) Also in *Gen 22* a messenger acts from heaven (cf. Gen 22:11 with Gen 21:17) but does not appear incarnate on earth. He has become – as in Gen 21:17-18 – a pure heavenly being, i.e. an "angel".[73] In both passages the angel speaks in the first person (cf. Gen 22:11b with Gen 21:18) but in Gen 22 the change from "God" (v.1-3.8.9) to "messenger of God" (v.11-12.15-18) and finally to YHWH (v.14) creates further complication and confusion. The multiple change in persons cannot be explained by several literary hands. The second speech of the messenger (v.15-18) has long been recognized as a secondary addition[74] but even without this addition, the "messenger of YHWH" remains a firm part of the substance of the narrative. Even if we attribute v.14b to a later editor – as is done frequently but unjustified[75] – YHWH remains indispensable for the naming of the place by Abraham.

The change from "Elohim" right at the beginning of the narrative to "messengers of YHWH" at its turning point has caused offence. Here it is remarkable that the term "Elohim" is used with the definitive arti-

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73   Thus correctly Westermann, Genesis 442. This insight is unfortunately eliminated in Rötger's extensive treatment of the subject in Gen 21-22, since he eliminates without providing any reasons the important localization "from heaven" (Mal'ak Jahwe 48-71).

74   See already Wellhausen, Composition 26. The recent defence of the originality of Gen 22:15-18 on the basis of intertextual observations by Steins, Bindung 135-147, only demonstrates how biblical exegesis in some quarters has gone to the dogs. Similar things can be said about the random, agenda-driven reconstruction of a base text by Hardmeier, Realitätssinn 1-75, who neglects to provide any reason for his atomizing and surgical literary-criticism in Gen 22:1-2 and Gen 22:12.

75   See only the hints at this special place that run through the narrative (v.2.3.4.9.14) and to which the sacrifice is obviously tied. YHWH himself has chosen this place (v.2.3.9). The closing sentence in v.14b with which the narrator arrives in the present ("today") is the climax and aim of these allusions. "The Mountain (on which) YHWH appears" is not a real place name but a sparsely cloaked allusion to Jerusalem. See the notes in Blum, Komposition 324, and Veijola, Opfer 152-153.

cle.[76] If we take the multifaceted connections between Gen 21:8-20 and Gen 22 into account[77] it is likely to interpret the article as an explicit reference to God who determined Isaac as the heir of Abraham (Gen 21:21) and who is also "with Ishmael" (Gen 21:20).[78] This, at first glance, intensifies the demand of this God in Gen 22:2. At a second glance, however, this reference can be interpreted as a hint of the author for his readers to cling to the promise of this God in Gen 21:12 – in spite of an unreasonable demand. Despite the fact that Abraham does not possess this lens he acts accordingly, if we take his speeches to his servants (Gen 22:5) and to his son (Gen 22:8) literally. As Gen 22:14 shows, for the narrator it is abundantly clear that this God has to be identified with no other than YHWH.

Is there a plausible reason for the change to YHWH and his messenger? The divine name YHWH is only mentioned when the messenger interferes in Gen 22:11. During the plan to bring the son as sacrifice the general term "God" is used. Therefore we can suspect that the author wanted to stress Abraham's experience of the Divinity by employing this remarkable difference:

> Solange sich Jhwh rätselhaft hinter seinem drohenden Befehl in V.2 verbirgt, steht die Gottesbezeichnung (h)ʾlhym, seine befreiende Zuwendung zu Abraham hingegen zeigt die Verwendung des Eigennamens an.[79]

While the change from God to his messenger in Gen 21 is connected to the addressee, the change from "God" to YHWH and his messenger in Gen 22 differentiates between the different forms by which God meets Abraham. Despite the fact that the "messenger of YHWH" called Abraham from heaven, Abraham encounters in this call YHWH himself. Did not Abraham tell his son on the way to the slaughtering place: "God himself will provide the lamb for a burnt offering"?[80] In the end he calls this place "YHWH will provide".

(5) An angel appears for the last time in *Gen 24* in the Abraham narrative. Abraham exhorts his servant with the following words: "YHWH, the God of heaven, ... he will send his messenger before you" (Gen 24:7). After he arrives at the relatives in Aram-Naharaim the servant remembers Abraham's words: "YHWH before whom I walk will

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76 In v.3 and v.9 the article is obviously used to create a reference back to God mentioned at the start of the narrative.

77 Blum, Komposition 314, calls the expulsion of Ishmael the dress-rehearsal of Gen 22.

78 Already *Midr. Gen. Rab.* realizes the connection between Gen 22:2 and Gen 21:1 but interprets it as an inconsistency in God that Abraham accepts willingly (LVI 10).

79 Blum, Komposition 323.

80 Here in Gen 22:8 the article is missing for ʾlhym; maybe an indication that Abraham as the protagonist of the narrative had hoped to the end that God would intervene.

send his messenger with you and make your journey successful" (Gen 24:40). Abraham's experiences with YHWH from which he derives his trust in God's support appear in the summarizing relative clauses. These clauses reveal the literary horizon of Gen 24. This horizon encompasses the Abraham narrative as a whole in its late and post-priestly form: Gen 24:7 alludes to Gen 12:1-3 as well as to the divine speeches (*Verheißungsreden*) in general and to the sworn promise of the land for Abraham in Gen 15:18. Gen 24:40 is clearly familiar with Gen 17:1.

The concept of a messenger who travels "before you" does not originate in the patriarchal narratives but is derived from the late deuteronomistic passages of the Exodus-narrative. The "guiding angel" is closely connected with the deliverance from Egypt and the wandering through the desert into the promised land (Exod 14:19; 23:20-23; Num 20:16). On the other hand the sending of a messenger appears instead of a direct guidance by God as an emergency measurement that assures a divine escort after Israel's sin in Exod 32 and protects Israel from God's anger (Exod 32:34; 33:2; cf. God's face in Exod 33:14).

Gen 24:7.40 does not only presuppose the literary connection of patriarchal and Exodus narrative but also transfers the concept of a guiding angel to the realm of family religion. Alexander Rofé has shown conclusively that the fairly extensive narrative is the product of a rather late author.[81]

The *ml'k* of Gen 24 is as invisible as he has been in Gen 48:16 and he does not deliver an explicit message. He is simply a way in which God is close to humans in a concealed way. Therefore the translation with "angel" is most appropriate for both passages. God is with the humans as a guardian angel (see Ps 91:11), who paves the way (Gen 24:7) and makes life successful (*ṣlḥ* in Gen 24:40). YHWH dwells in heaven and is long called "God of heaven"[82] but his "angel" is invisible and thus "with" and "amongst" the humans.

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81   See Rofé, Enquiry 27-39.
82   The occurrences of the formula all belong to Persian times (Jonah 1:9; 2Chr 36:26; Ezra 1:2; Neh 1:4.5; 2:4.20 etc.) or are even later than that (Dan 2:18.19.37.44; Jdt 5:8; 6:19; 11:17; Tob 7:13; 8:15; 10:11), see also Rofé, Enquiry 28.

5. Heavenly Messengers and their Ancient
Near Eastern Background

On the basis of a religious-historical model of development it was argued that Israel, during her transition from poly- to monotheism transformed original Canaanite deities into "angels" and "divine messengers".[83] There are, however, no indications for such a decrease in power of the deities. This interpretative model assumes that those texts that mention divine messengers always derive from ancient and pre-Israelite local sagas dealing with pre-yahwistic deities. Nowadays such a view is difficult to maintain. Only in Gen 18 we can argue for a pre-Israelite setting of the three men but they are introduced as "men" and *not* as messengers.

The so called "theory of interpolation" first developed by M. Lagrange seems to be more promising:[84]

> Wo die ältere Zeit unbedenklich Jahwe selber auftreten und handeln liess, ersetzt man ihn später gern durch Engel, entsprechend der zunehmenden Neigung, Jahwe von unmittelbarer Berührung mit dieser Welt fernzuhalten, namentlich ihn von gewissen belastenden Handlungen zu befreien.[85]

This explanation is supported by those texts where YHWH only exists in heaven. Against such an interpretation we have to mention the texts where the messenger and his master speak to humans (Gen 18-19; Gen 21).[86] Furthermore we have to take into account that those texts where YHWH speaks freely and directly with humans are not necessarily part of the oldest parts of the history of tradition but rather belong to the youngest literary level (see above 2.1-3).

A cursory glance at the evidence from the Ancient Near East can help to dissolve this dilemma. Lowell K. Handy has shown convincingly – using Ugarit as an example – that messenger gods have always been an integral part of the Syro-Palestinian pantheon and its hierarchy structured in four categories. The lowest level is occupied by the "messenger gods". They are gods but they do not take part in the decisions made by higher gods and simply serve as organs executing their orders.[87] In mythical texts from Ugarit we encounter messengers sent by

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83   On this theory see Irvin, Mytharion 101f.
84   Lagrange, Ange 221.
85   Baumgartner, Problem 245. The question remains, however, what exactly burdens
       YHWH in Gen 16; 21?
86   G. v. Rad's interpretation (ThWNT I, 76) that YHWH is always mentioned when the
       text concerns him and not the human being, while the messenger of YHWH is mentioned when the human being is important is not always possible.
87   Handy, Host 149-168.

Yammu to the assembly of gods and to El, the father of the gods.[88] From time to time Baal also sends out messengers.[89] These messengers appear as "young men" delivering messages to Anat but also to Mot. They always act in pairs and even have names. Even mother Asherah employs her own messenger gods.[90] At least in Ugarit these messenger gods only function in the heavenly sphere. With the king (Danil and Kirta), however, El and Baal correspond in person.

Similar things can be said about Mesopotamia, where deities contact each other employing messenger gods. Several main gods even have their own personal messengers whose names we know, while the messenger pair Nusku and Kakka serves several masters.[91] Here, the myth of Nergal and Ershikagal is most instructive: the sky-god Anu sends via Kakka a message to the mistress of the underworld telling her that she should send her envoy Namtar so that he can collect her portion of the sacrificial meal. There is, too, "a long staircase of heaven" (cf. Gen 28:12) that connects heaven and underworld but only the messengers and not the other gods can use it.[92]

While divine messengers are sent in the Bible to announce the birth of a son (Gen 16; Judg 13; Luke 1) in the Ancient Near East, such a message can be delivered by El himself or – in a Hittite text – by the sun-god. The Hittite fairy tale "Appu and his two sons" connects little more with Gen 18 than the motif of a childless couple whom a deity helps to sons.[93] The reason for the childlessness in the Appu text is, however, the inexperience in sexual matters of Appu and his wife. In his helplessness Appu turns to the sun-god, who transforms himself into a young man (!), visits Appu unrecognized and gives him the advice to get properly drunk and to sleep with his wife. The advice is crowned immediately with success. We see that in the Ancient Near East too, a deity has to take up human form to be able to act on earth (cf. the "man" of Gen 32:23-30 and the "men" in Gen 18-19).

For various reasons, the biblical texts under scrutiny avoid a direct communication between God and humans. In Gen 18-19 and Gen 32 the narrative strategy of the texts makes such a communication impossible. In Gen 16, Gen 19 and Gen 21 the differentiation between God

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88   KTU 1.2 I 11 (= CoS I 245 = TUAT III 1119).
89   KTU 1.3 III 8,13,32,36; IV 5,32. In KTU 1.3 III 36 the names of the messenger gods are mentioned: they are called *gpn* and *ugr*.
90   They are called *qdš* and *amrr* (KTU 1.3 VI 10-11) and are mentioned next to main deities (1.123, 26).
91   See Meier, Messenger 119-122.
92   The passages are found in Col. I of the Sultantepe version (English translation in Foster, Muses 512-514; German translation in TUAT III/4, 769-771).
93   CoS I, 153-155 = TUAT III/4, 848-851.

and messenger on a narrative level corresponds to the distinction between Israel and foreigners. In Gen 22, in contrast, different experiences of God are allotted to God and the messenger of YHWH. As the brief survey of the Ancient Near Eastern material has shown, we do not need to use any of the questionable theories to explain the idea of mysterious men and divine messengers in the Bible. Ancient Israel was part of the culture of the Ancient Orient and therefore the concept of messenger gods was probably not unknown to her. This concept, however, is nothing more than a transposition of the earthly hierarchy with its institution of a messenger to the heavenly sphere. We cannot dispute that the popularity of "angels" increases when the experience of a transcendent God grows. Already in Gen 28 and Gen 32:2-3 the heavenly messengers represent the transcendence of the heavenly sphere on earth. This tendency of a growing transcendence finally culminates in the concept that the "messengers of YHWH / God" also act simply from heaven (Gen 22:11-12.15-18; 21:17-18). Here we have to remind ourselves that the Ancient Near Eastern concept of a "divine messenger" precedes this process.

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Abbreviations:

AHw cf. Soden, W. von

CoS cf. Hallo, W.W.

DNWSI cf. Hoftijzer, J.

KAI cf. Donner, H.

KTU cf. Dietrich, M.

LCI cf. Kirschbaum, E.

TUAT cf. Kaiser, O.

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Moses and the Exodus-Angel

ALEXANDER A. FISCHER, STUTTGART

At the end of his days Moses is standing on the mountain gazing to the opposite side full of longing. There is the land God has promised to Israel, his people, but he must not enter it. The Renaissance painter Luca Signorelli (ca. 1450-1523) presents this moment in the last picture of the cycle on Moses in the Sistine Chapel; at Moses' side he placed an angel who is showing him the Promised Land.[1] With his head bowed Moses is standing beside the angel on a precipice and gazing full of longing to the opposite side. Then he turns away in order to descend from the mountain and to lie down to die. Even there the angel (or some other figure) is following him, but behind the descending Moses he is just to be seen as a shadow. When we turn to the Bible and have a look into the text talking about the death of Moses (Deut 34) we will not find any trace of an angel. Nevertheless, Luca Signorelli's fresco suggests that the angel has appeared to Moses even before and that he accompanied him on his way. So, let us see.

1. The Angel within the Flame of Fire

Let us go back from the ending of the narrative on Moses to its beginning. Exod 3 relates the calling of Moses as taking place at the burning bush, which came to be situated in the vicinity of the mountain of God. The narrator is obviously interested in the discovery of Mount Sinai as a holy area; this may be gathered from the Hebrew word designating the bush, סנה, which for sure does not accidentally allude paronomastically to סיני, the mountain of God.[2] Of course, this does not mean that is an old tradition. It is even as likely to assume that the bush was chosen as a place of theophany only because of the homophony so that

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1   The legacy and death of Moses (with the Latin inscription "replicatio legis scriptae a Moise"), Rome, Vatican, Sistine Chapel (southern wall), about 1482; illus. in Kanter / Henry, Signorelli 98-100. The art historian's question whether Luca Signorelli himself is responsible for the scene with the angel, or whether Bartolomeo della Gatta executed it, will not be considered here.

2   Cf. already Greßmann, Mose 24.

God's appearance in the bush was modelled on the revelation on Mount Sinai.[3] But in the present text the mountain of God is not called Sinai. Rather, it is explicitly named Horeb, which will be discussed later. Anyway, it is there that we meet YHWH's angel for the first time in Exod (Exod 3:1-5):

> 1 Moses was keeping the small cattle of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian. And he led the small cattle beyond the wilderness and came to the mountain of God, to Horeb. 2 There the angel of YHWH appeared to him in a flame of fire right out of the bush. And suddenly he saw a bush burning with fire, yet the bush was not consumed. 3 Moses said: "I will go and look at this great sight why the bush is not burnt (up)." 4 When YHWH saw that he approached to look at it, God called him right out of the bush and said: "Moses, Moses!" He replied: "Here I am!" 5 And he said: "Do not come closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, since the place on which you are standing is holy ground."

Turning towards the angel of YHWH who appears before Moses in v.2a, a first observation may be made. In the present text the angel's appearance right in the centre of the bush is coming too early since Moses notices the burning bush only in v.2b. This is expressed by the Hebrew phrase "and he gazed, and look" (וירא והנה), which always introduces a new, surprising element within narratives.[4] It seems obvious to assume that the angel's appearance not only interrupts the context of v.1 and v.2b,[5] but that it was positioned before the discovery of the bush, and thus before the call of Moses deliberately. Some further observations confirm this assumption: in v.2a the scene that has the angel appear before Moses in a flame of fire presupposes that Moses is close to the bush, whereas according to v.3 Moses still has to depart (סור) from the path in order to reach the bush. Already in v.2a Moses knows the reason for the uncommon sight that the bush does not burn up: it is the angel in the flame of fire and not a natural phenomenon. In v.3, however, his curiosity makes him look for an explanation for the bush not being consumed by fire. A possibility to explain the inconsistencies between v.2a and v.2b-3 is to assume that there is a change of narrative perspectives turning from the narrator to the character of

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3   Cf. Exod 3:4 "and God called him right out of the bush" with 19:3 "and YHWH called him from the mountain". Van Seters, Life 40f., wants to relate the burning bush to the menorah; thereby the narration of the call of Moses would supply an aetiology of the cultic object.

4   Cf. e.g. Gen 18:2; 24:63; 29:2; 33:1; Josh 5:13; 8:20; Judg 3:24; 2Sam 13:34. The fact that the bush is a determined noun in v.2b does not hinder this view because the definite article going with סנה designates the species "a prickly bush" when it is first mentioned, afterwards it refers to "the aforesaid", cf. Jacob, Buch 44.

5   Cf. Gertz, Tradition 266.

Moses.[6] But this assumption is not satisfactory because one would ex-
pect that the character of Moses would be brought to the encounter
with the angel. This, however, is not the case. The line of suspense
within the original narrative is obviously a different one. Through the
surprising discovery of the burning bush and through the once more
miraculously heightened phenomenon of its not being consumed[7] by
fire, it is leading to the experience immediately following in v.4, namely
that God himself is present in this place. In order to achieve this inten-
tion of the narrative one has to switch from the angel to God in the
present text. It is remarkable that this transition has already been pre-
pared in v.2a by the redactor from the outset. Through the doublet
"right out of the bush" (מתוך הסנה v.2a and v.4b) and the double occur-
rence of the addressee (אליו v.2a und 4b) the angel's appearance and
God's speech become parallels; therefore YHWH's angel can be kept in
the background as compared to God's speech on the synchronic level.

Still, from a diachronic perspective the question arises: Why is the
angel introduced in Exod 3:2a at all? This question is quite adequate
insofar as the angel does neither appear again within the call-narrative
in Exod 3-4, nor in the course of the narrative about the exodus up to
Exod 14. Apart from the strangely abrupt remark in Num 20:16 the part
he plays during Israel's departure from Egypt remains entirely vague.
Instead, in Exod 3:7-8aα YHWH declares that he himself has descended
to deliver his people from the Egyptians' control and to take them up to
a good and broad land. This land is characterized in v.8b as the resi-
dence (מקום)[8] of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Periz-
zites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, of course this is a later addition
again.[9] It foreshadows a theme to be developed in the context of the
following account – Judg 1:1-2:5 will describe it in detail –, namely the
expulsion of the former inhabitants. But how will the Israelites get to
this already inhabited land at all? Again, this question may only be
answered by anticipating. Actually, in order to guide them, an angel of
YHWH is commissioned, as may be gathered from Exod 23:23 (see
below). Considering that God's speech in Exod 3:7ff. already evokes the
idea that the land is the aim of the delivering, it is easy to see that the

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6   Cf. Childs, Book 49f.: "2a functions as a superscription to the story (cf. Ex. [Gen !]
    18.1), whereas 2b describes the chronological sequence."
7   The original meaning of בער I qal is "to burn, to take fire, to catch fire", pi'el "to
    kindle, to set on fire, to ignite". The resultative aspect "to burn up, to consume" is as
    a rule expressed by אכל, cf. e.g. Num 11:1; Isa 9:17; 10:17.
8   Cf. Exod 23:20!
9   For a list of the land's former inhabitants cf. also Exod 3:17; 23:23; 32:2; 34:11; Deut
    20:17; Josh 24:11; Judg 3:5.

redaction that was interested in the Exodus-angel, tried to introduce him at the outset of the exodus narrative. Remembering the appearance of the angel in Judg 13:20, the burning bush seemed an especially acceptable ingredient.

These observations lead to the result that YHWH's angel belongs to a supplementary layer that already bears in mind the journey to the promised land, i.e. that it is not part of a source traditionally identified as the Yahvist.[10] A first clue as to the probable circle of writers our author who supplied the addition belonged to, might be gathered from the localisation of the event, as the mountain of God and the Horeb are related.[11] As is well known the name "Horeb" is characteristic of the style of Deuteronomy and Deuteronomists; it was applied to the mountain of God as a substitute for "Sinai" which came to be avoided because of its association with Edom.[12] Anyway, it is extremely striking that "Horeb" is mentioned in Exod 3:1 because, regarding the homophony of the bush and the Sinai in Hebrew, one would expect the mountain of God to be left at least unnamed.[13] Indeed, scholars do not agree whether the redactor added the entire indication of the place "to the mountain of God, the Horeb", or just the name. The latter view is supported by the locative ending which seems to be superfluous in relation to the mountain of God.[14] Actually, within the Book of Exodus Horeb occurs again only once, namely in Exod 33:3b-6, a passage coined by Deuteronomistic writers – again in connexion with (YHWH's) angel (cf. Exod 33:2)![15]

2. The Pillar of Cloud and the Angel

In the story about the miraculous deliverance at the Red Sea (Exod 13:20-14:31) there are two different narrative lines, which were traditionally attributed to the Yahvist and the Priestly Code.[16] The non-

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10 Cf. e.g. Schmidt, Exegese 228-234.

11 The only further occurrence of the phrase "the mountain of God, the Horeb" is found in 1Kgs 19:8.

12 Cf. Kaiser, חרב I 160f.Though traditional research found the name "Horeb" already in the Elohistic source, it is witnessed only in Deuteronomistic literature, cf. Noth, Studien 29; Perlitt, Sinai 306-310.

13 Cf. Exod 4:27; 18:5.

14 The incoherence of "mountain of God" and "Horeb" is also confirmed by the Septuagint which offers the lectio facilior εις το ορος Χωρηβ.

15 In Exod 17:6 "at Horeb" is obviously a secondary localization of the rock of Meribah, as it does not harmonize with the preceding adverb שם in v.3, 6, cf. Noth, Buch 112.

16 Cf. the source-critical survey in Kohata, Jahwist 372.

Priestly text relates that YHWH went in front of the Israelites when they departed from Egypt, in a pillar of cloud in order to show them their way (cf. Exod 13:21a).[17] When the King of Egypt had his chariots prepared and started to pursue the Israelites, they were affected by fright. Moses, however, reassures the people and announces that YHWH is going to help the Israelites and to fight for them. On this occasion the Exodus-angel appears. But one is surprised because he just enters the narrative unexpectedly and as in passing. Afterwards he is not mentioned any more. Let us have a look at the text (Exod 14:19-20):

> [19] *And God's angel, who went before the Israelites' army, set out and went behind them.* And the pillar of cloud set out in front of them and took its place behind them. [20] And he / it placed himself / itself between the army of the Egyptians and the army of the Israelites, and the cloud caused darkness [and illumined the night.].[18] So the one army could not approach the other all night long.

Even at first glance it is obvious and traceable right into the wording that God's angel and the pillar of cloud are opposed to one another.[19] Both of them withdraw from their guiding position in front of the Israelites in order to fulfil a protective function. By placing themselves between the Israelites and their pursuers, they separate the two armies from one another and thus realize YHWH's help which he promised the people through Moses. But the narrative only tells us about the pillar of cloud, how it actually fulfils its protective function. It makes darkness spread between the two military camps and thereby it succeeds in keeping the Egyptians away from the Israelites while it is still day, but also later at night. The angel's role, however, remains a vague one; what he is doing is not said. This fosters the suspicion that his protecting function was prompted by the pillar of cloud which is not only firmly established within the story about the miraculous deliverance at the Red Sea, but has also been introduced into it before.[20] Be

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17 The pillar of fire was added only by the final redactor of the Pentateuch, cf. Groß, Wolkensäule 108f.

18 The transmitted text "and there was the cloud and darkness" is incorrect here and hardly reconstructable without any uncertainty. The reason for this is not so much a textual corruptness, but rather a redactional procedure, cf. Kohata, Jahwist 291. Because the Priestly Code continues in Exod 14:21a, 22 the redactor of the Pentateuch confronted the problem that the people of Israel could hardly pass the divided waters in utter darkness. To create a balance between the sources he had to ascribe the light he considered necessary for the nocturnal passage, to the cloud because this is active in v.20. The textual disorder basically results from the insertion of v.20aγ so that emendations or harmonizations in the text are unnecessary.

19 Cf. the doublet v.19a "set out and went behind them" with v.19b "set out … and took its place behind them".

20 Cf. Weimar, Meerwundererzählung 46f.

that as it may, the doublet found in Exod 14:19a is obviously to be attributed to the same redactional procedure which we have already observed regarding the insertion of the angel's appearance in Exod 3:2a. Again, this raises the question: Why was the angel introduced into the story of the miraculous deliverance at the Red Sea? The answer that one would not manage without him when dealing with such an important event like Israel's delivery at the Red Sea, is, of course, not sufficient. Instead, it is likely that the guiding and protecting role, which is primarily associated with the pillar of cloud in Exod 13-14 has something to do with the character and the commission of the Exodus-angel. That is why we ought to find out more about his mission. To achieve this we will have to follow his traces further through the Book of Exodus.

3. Look, I Am Going to Send an Angel in front of You

At Mount Sinai we find the Exodus-angel again, this time in a speech made by God which was added to the Book of the Covenant as an appendix (Exod 23:20-33).[21]. This passage is special in several respects. This is the only section i the Book of Exodus explicitly touching the conquest of the land, mocking the foreign gods the inhabitants of the land are worshipping, and proclaiming that it is forbidden to conclude treaties with them.[22] Already this listing closely relates it to Deuteronomy and Deuteronomistic literature, on the other hand does the introduction of the angel distinguish it from these. However, it does not presuppose that we already know about the angel because first God is talking about him without the definite article as "an angel" (Exod 23:20), then, in the following course of his speech he designates him more accurately and identifies him as "my angel" (Exod 23:20-24):

> [20] "Look, I am going to send an angel in front of you, to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place that I have chosen. [21] Mind him and listen to his voice! Do not rebel against him! *For he would not tolerate your rebellion.* For my name is right within him. [22] If you actually listen to his voice and do all that I say, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an oppressor to your oppressors. [23] Yes, my angel will go in front of you and bring you to the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, and I will exterminate them. [24] You shall not bow down before their gods, nor worship them and do what they are doing, but ..."

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21   Cf. Kratz, Komposition 146.
22   Cf. Oswald, Israel 54 and 96.

Moses and the Exodus-Angel

So far we could only deduce the function of the Exodus-angel at the burning bush and at the Red Sea from the respective contexts, but now his commission is explicitly specified. A double task is given to him: On the one hand, he is to protect the people of Israel on their way (through the wilderness), as he has already done in the story about the miraculous deliverance at the Red Sea. On the other hand, he is to lead them to the place God has chosen for them. The expression used here is in fact exceptional,[23] but especially the repetition of the infinitive "and bring you to…" in v.20 by the inflected verbal form "he will bring you to" in v.23, proves that the "place" does not denominate a sanctuary, but the territory of those residents which are enumerated.[24] When one also considers a number of occurrences of the hif'il "to bring to", which take YHWH as their subject and the land as the object in the Book of Exodus as well as in Deuteronomy,[25] it becomes clear that YHWH is sharing the guiding and protecting role, which he has taken, with his angel. Therefore, one will not find any essential difference between the two; and one may not emphasize too much the change of subjects in v.23; there the angel's commission covers only the time up to Israel's arrival in the promised land, whereas YHWH takes it upon him to annihilate viz. to expel the land's inhabitants (cf. Exod 33:2). Rather, the angel by himself represents God's presence, as v.21 explicitly remarks. For God's name which is an accepted symbol of divine presence in Deuteronomistic theology[26] also is with the angel. And this means that he is not only authorized by YHWH, but that in addition he stands for God's presence, an idea also associated with the angel in the flame of fire in Exod 3:2a.

Therefore, it goes without saying that one must obey the angel's instructions, as if YHWH himself had uttered them. The admonitions in v.21a and v.22 which are skilfully arranged as brackets to the declaration of divine presence, make it quite plain that the success of the angel's mission is linked to the compliance of the people of Israel. Considering that Deuteronomy repeatedly says that on their way into the

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23   For the phrase מקום אשר הכנתי cf. 1Chr 15:3,12; 2Chr 1:4 referring to the position of the Ark of YHWH and 2Chr 3:1referring to the place designated for he Temple. In these passages David and not YHWH is subject of הכין.

24   Cf. Ausloos, Elements 490-495; Neef, "Ich" 64f, hinting to the parallel mentioning of מקום and ארץ in Deut 26:9. Further , Num 32:17 is to be considered as well as Exod 32:34, where a number of witnesses add המקום according to the sense; cf. BHS.

25   Most interesting are those occurrences which connect YHWH's bringing them into the land with his oath to the Patriarchs; cf. Exod 6:8; 13:5,11 with Deut 6:10,23; 31:20,21.

26   Cf. Durham, Exodus 335; and for the theology of God's name cf. Keller, Untersuchungen 132-134.

promised land the Israelites resisted YHWH's order, the command in
v.21a to withstand the angel by no means, gains its special disturbing
quality.[27] Thus the paraenetic passages which are connected with his
mission give the text its special character and again raise the question
into what kind of context God's speech has been placed.

Traditionally the passage in Exod 23:20-33 is classified as an epi-
logue summarizing and concluding the Book of the Covenant. Is this
characterization correct? Two observations evoke doubts about this. On
the one hand none of the commandments assembled within the Book of
the Covenant is mentioned again in its final section nor is there another
appeal to obey these commandments.[28] Instead the admonitions relate
to the guidance by the angel on the way and, from v.24, to Israel's be-
haviour after their arrival in the promised land. Thus one has the im-
pression that it is a speech "which once served a homiletical purpose in
Deuteronomistic circles in connection with the occupation of the prom-
ised land."[29] On the other hand, more recent investigations have found
a redactional layer of the pre-Deuteronomic Book of the Covenant
(Exod 20:24-23:12*), which re-organizes the code and, by inserting the
festival calendar taken from Exod 34, emphasizes that the revelations of
the commandments in the former and latter pericope both dealing with
Israel at Mount Sinai are identical.[30] Exod 20:22-23 and 23:9,13,14-19
already provide a framework for the Book of the Covenant so that
God's speech in Exod 23:20-33 just reappears as an appendix or sup-
plement in its present context. Taking into account its relatively iso-
lated position, it is quite appropriate to characterize it – according to its
theme – as a speech composed to supply the people of Israel (in addi-
tion to the Book of the Covenant?) with promises and admonitions on
their way to the cultivated land.[31] Of course, one might ask why the
dismissing speech was not placed either at the end of the Book of the
Covenant or within the Book of Numbers just before the departure
from Mount Sinai.[32] A rearrangement is out of the question because just
a little later the angel's mission is dramatically focussed again, namely

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27   In Exod 23:21 one should vocalize hif'il impf. 2. sg. m. juss. מרה, cf. Gesenius /
     Kautzsch, Grammatik, § 67y. For the phrases המרה את־פי יהוה cf. Deut 1:26,43; 9:23
     and המרה עם יהוהcf. Deut 9:7,24; 31:27; for qal-form cf. Num 20:24; 27:14.
28   Cf. Durham, Exodus 334; Houtman, Bundesbuch 337.
29   Childs, Exodus 461.
30   Cf. Otto, Pentateuchredaktion, 74f; and the redactional Deuteronomistic layer Schwien-
     horst-Schönberger, Bundesbuch 285f, has described.
31   Cf. Neef, „Ich" 59f.
32   Cf. e.g. Smend, Erzählung 180-182, supposing that the speech of dismissal originally
     followed Exod 34:28.

after the Israelites' apostasy in Exod 32, thus presupposing the angel's being delegated.

Indeed, it would be very helpful for our topic, the Exodus-angel, if we could identify the group of writers who present the angel, his mission and his task to us in the dismissing speech. In research, though, it is extremely controversially discussed to whom he might be attributed, and that with good reason. On the one hand the Exodus-angel does not occur in Deuteronomy and in Deuteronomistic literature. Besides, there are expressions rather untypical of Deuteronomistic style.[33] That is why some wanted to draw the conclusion that the dismissing speech was formulated in pre- or proto-Deuteronomistic times.[34] On the other hand it is not to be denied that there are in fact also Deuteronomistic phrases and a number of typical themes that will originate in Deuteronomistic sources[35]. Special attention is paid to the relationship between Exod 23:20-33 and Deut 7:1-26, which is not working in one direction only.[36] So just two possibilities remain: Either one expects a pre-Deuteronomistic tradition (which would require to eliminate extensive parts of the text[37]), or one thinks that the entire dismissing speech was possibly composed by late Deuteronomists or post-Deuteronomistically. Though we cannot solve this problem here, in my opinion the second option hits the mark. It is supported by the fact that the secondary (anyway not being a pre-Deuteronomistic one) redactional layer of the Book of the Covenant through enclosing this booklet by the brackets, namely Exod 20:22-23 and 23:9,13,14-19, just makes it a speech of God and thus prepares the connexion with the dismissing speech. So we return to the Exodus-angel and remember that YHWH commissioned his angel to guide and protect the people of Israel in order to bring them into the promised land safe and sound. But the events at Mount Sinai follow closely, one on the heels of the other. While Moses is still lingering on the mountain and talking to God, the Israelites have deserted God and are dancing around the Golden Calf. It seems likely that God will revoke the commission to his angel.

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33 Ausloss, Elements 486-489, warns to identify Dtr phrases only with caution.

34 Cf. e.g. Neef, „Ich" 60f. Considering the usage of גרשׁ "to expel" Blum, Studien 371, however, is right to ask if one may assume a non-dtr or pre-Dtr phrase just because of an element of style uncharacteristic of Dtr.

35 Cf. Van Seters, Redaction 74.

36 Cf. the remark by Veijola, Buch, 201-205, that only the redaction focussing on the theology of the covenant (DtrB) in Deut 7:4-5,12-16,20,22-24 used the appendix to the Book of the Covenant (Exod 23:20-33) as a literary source. Deut 7:2 would be prior to Exod 23:32.

37 Cf. e.g. Osumi, Kompositionsgeschichte 63-69, and 212-217.

4. The Angel Accompanies Them

These apprehensions will not come true. God keeps up his mission of
the angel. Nevertheless, the following passage where we meet the angel
once again, has a threatening ring because there are consequences to
the Israelites having deserted YHWH. Once again we learn this
through a speech made by God. Thus we can already give one impor-
tant result of our investigation: The Exodus-angel is not a character
who would be firmly established in a narrative context. Rather, he is a
product of theological reflection tackling with the problem of God's
presence with regard to the fact that this people is thoroughly rebel-
lious and stubborn. Therefore we will not be surprised to find that also
the reflections in the following passage regarding the Exodus-angel
were inserted into a basic text. This seems to indicate that we are con-
fronted with a redactional layer prompted by Exod 23:20ff. as a whole;
the angel's introduction into the Book of Exodus is due to this.[38] Let us
see whether and how the angel's mission changes after the people of
Israel have sinned against YHWH (Exod 33:1-3):

> [1] YHWH said to Moses: „Go, set out, you and the people whom you have
> brought out of Egypt, away from this place into the land that I have sworn
> to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying: 'To your descendants I will
> give it.' [2] *And I will send an angel going before you and I will expel the Amorites,
> the Hittites and Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites.* [3] To an land flowing
> with milk and honey. *But I will not set out in your midst because you are a
> stubborn people, or I might destroy you on the way.*"

In the passage quoted above God actually gives the order to depart
from Mount Sinai. On this occasion he assures Moses that he is not only
going to keep up his oath sworn to the Patriarchs, but also to send his
angel in front of the people in order to bring them safe into the prom-
ised land. That the angel was inserted into God's speech only after-
wards is easy to see because v.2 interrupts the syntactical sequence of
v.1 and v.3a.[39] Further, it is obvious that the reason given in v.3b,
namely that YHWH will not set out with the people, cannot be con-
nected with the order to depart, but only with the sending of the angel.
Thus v.3b syntactically harks back to v.2 and at the same time offers the
motive of the people's mourning and repentance described in v.4 (5-6).
The entire passage is only clearly understandable when one knows that
the people turned away from God and turned to foreign gods through

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38   Cf. especially Blum, Studien 365-377.
39   The Septuaginta also felt this rupture and therefore created the beginning of a sen-
     tence for v.3a. The verbal start "and I will bring you in" does not improve the text.
     Rather, this reading makes the incoherence even more prominent.

the Golden Calf (cf. Exod 32:1-6). This connection is established explicitly, namely by the leitmotif עם־קשה־ערף "stiff-necked people", which occurs in Exod 32:9 for the first time and is resumed in 33:3,5.[40] Obviously, the angel-redactor is convinced that the people of Israel have forfeited God's presence among them because of their stubbornness. From this follows a severe theological problem that is dealt with in the present passage: How can God fulfil his oath sworn to the Patriarchs when he refuses to accompany his people on their way through the wilderness and into the promised land? And what does that mean considering the angel's mission?

We will inquire into this problem with regard to three aspects. First, the Exodus-angel stands out more prominent and distinct. As compared with the combined action of YHWH and his angel that was to be observed in Exod 23:20-23, now the angel takes the entire function of guiding and protecting YHWH has entrusted him with. That is why he is the one who goes up from Gilgal to Bochim in order to reveal the people's sin after the promised land has been entered (cf. Judg 2:1-5). As the generation experiencing the exodus stubbornly refused to listen to his voice,[41] the inhabitants of the land are not expelled, as YHWH had originally announced it in Exod 33:2. Secondly, the sending of the angel is not to be regarded as a poor substitute stepping in while God is absent. This interpretation is to be excluded because of the divine presence in, with and under God's angel which is to be explained by the theology of God's name. This also means that the declaration of divine presence in Exod 23:21bβ, which stands out within its context, obviously shows its full impact only within the present context. The declaration proves that the angel's introduction is the only possibility to tolerate, right through the differentiation between YHWH and his angel, God's refusal to accompany the people and at the same time to preserve his divine presence during the wandering in the wilderness. The idea that the main thesis of the Priestly Code, namely YHWH dwelling right in the centre of his people, is in the background of this reflection as a forfeited option, is not even absurd.[42] Thirdly, when God withholds his presence, this appears not only as a consequence of the people having deserted him, but also as protection for the people who

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40   Cf. also Exod 34:9; Deut 9:6,13; 31:27; and dtr Judg 2:19; 2Kgs 17:14 as well.

41   Judg 2:2 establishes a link with the angel's admonition in Exod 23:21. At the same time the angel of YHWH thereby also gains the competence to judge, cf. Judg 2:3 and Blum, Knoten 190-192.

42   Considering the enigmatic passage about the tent of meeting in Exod 33:7-11 this opinion is acceptable as one does not anticipate its classification regarding redaction history; fort this cf. Gertz, Beobachtungen 103.

have shown their rebellious and stubborn character. Any direct contact with YHWH would mean their immediate disaster (cf. Exod 33:3,5). In a certain sense the punishment of the guilty people is still postponed, and the realization of the purpose to bring the Israelites into the land safe, is entirely left to the angel. Anyway one can interpret the insertion Exod 32:34aβb which is found in the immediately preceding passage in this sense as well:

> [33] But YHWH said to Moses: "Whoever has sinned against me, I will erase out of my book. [34] And now go, lead the people to place about which I have spoken to you. *Look, my angel will go in front of you. And when the day of judgement has come I will punish them for their sins.*"

5. Moses and the Exodus-angel

When we retrospectively try to find the theological line that connects the rather different supplements provided by the angel-redactor, we see that all these passages touch the problem of divine presence on the way out of slavery in Egypt into the promised land. In Exod 3:2a at the burning bush Moses experienced God's presence through the figure of the angel. In the story about the miraculous deliverance at the Red Sea it is the angel again, who corresponds to the cloud as a symbol of divine presence in Exod 14:20 and who protectively steps in between the two military camps. In the dismissing speech it says in the centre between the two mentionings of the angel's mission in 23:21bβ that God's name is with the angel. The subtle differentiation between YHWH and his name already provides the key for imagining that YHWH does not join the people while simultaneously there is divine presence because of the angel joining them. Thus the Exodus-angel enters his guiding and protecting role step by step and then also takes admonishing and judging functions (cf. Judg 2:1-5). For YHWH he finally becomes the only option to bring the rebellious and stubborn people into the promised land still protected by his presence which is then represented by the angel.

In Exod 33:12 Moses once more addresses YHWH: "Look, you have said to me: 'Bring up this people'; but you did not let me know whom you will send with me." This conversation loosely linked with the order to set out in v.1, also deals with the nature and possibility of divine presence in Israel.[43] Our angel-redactor passed his comment on this already in v.2 and put the angel by Moses' side: he is going to go with

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43   Cf. Noth, Buch 211.

Moses and to guide the people. Considering this one has to admit that the Renaissance painter Luca Signorelli showed a delicate feeling for the angel-redaction unfolded here, as he put the angel as a comforter by the side of Moses, who was, at the end of his days, exceedingly troubled because of the people's stubbornness. Both are gazing from the precipice placed within the picture to the promised land on the opposite side which Moses must not enter. But Moses is certain that the angel by his side is going to bring the people of Israel sound over there and thus will accomplish his life's work.

Summary

The angel is found only in a few passages within the Book of Exodus. He is not a character in the story who would be developed through the narrative in the account of the exodus. Rather, his appearance is due to a theological reflection on God's presence while the people are guided into the promised land. Each single insertion of the angel can be interpreted as a part of a redactional layer which extends from the Book of Exodus into the Book of Judges (Exod 3:2a; 14:19a; 23,20-33*; 32:34aβb; 33:2,3b-4; Judg 2:1-5).

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The Angel as One Form of Divine Communication in the Balaam Narrative

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The tale of Balaam and the Angel is a remarkable story within the Balaam narrative, in that specific characters appear only there and subsequently drop out of the story altogether. Thus, these characters and their motifs will be considered first, then, due to the apparent independence of the narrative, some diachronic aspects will be discussed. It is, however, hardly possible to find an anchor to date it; the story might well have had a long prehistory. A diachronic treatment is all the more difficult as a skilful redactor established clear links to the following material. A verse-by-verse treatment reveals many connections to other texts with similar vocabulary. Finally, it is argued that the story of Balaam and the Angel is primarily a prophetic story discussing prophetic openness as a gift of God, with the angel being only an added interesting feature. Thus, this story fits well into the Balaam narrative, which describes various modes of divine communication.[2]

1. Characters and Motifs

The story of Balaam and the Angel in Num 22:22-35 has three important characters: Balaam, an angel and a female donkey. The plot is advanced through this constellation of characters, each of whom stands for a certain attribute (blindness, threat, clear-sightedness).[3] The theme of sight or blindness is also expressed by specific language. The verb ראה is a "Leitwort" in the Balaam narrative. It appears in both the prose story and in the poetic sections and refers to different objects:

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2 For other modes of divine communication in the Balaam narrative see Gass, Modes (forthcoming).

3 The precise relationship between the figures and the attributes cannot be treated here in detail.

a) Seeing the angel in Num 22:23, 25, 27, 31, 33.
b) Seeing Israel in Num 22:2, 41; 23:9, 13(tris), 21; 24:2, 17.
c) Seeing a revelation of God in Num 23:3; 24:1.
d) Seeing further things to come in Num 24:20, 21.

Especially in Num 23 and 24, this verb highlights the beneficent status of Israel which makes cursing impossible. Merely looking at reality will reveal God's purposes. Thus, this narrative is centred round the motif of the blindness of the renowned seer Balaam. Furthermore, the angel must also be interpreted as a metaphor for the inability of Balaam to see what is most important.

2. Literary Independence

The tale of Balaam and the Angel in Num 22:22-35 interrupts the coherence of the larger narrative, and is certainly a later addition.[4] There are several inconsistencies which point to the discreteness of the story of Balaam and the Angel: Balaam is accompanied by two servants, not by the Moabite chieftains (v.22 vs. v.21); the perplexing change in God's will, shown by sending the angel to prevent a journey by Balaam which had been previously allowed (v.20 vs. v.22); the permission to move on is redundant (v.35 vs. v.20); the divine designation is changed to YHWH in vv.22-35; and v.36 is a natural sequel to v.21.[5]

This narrative may derive from a separate source that tries to downplay Balaam's abilities since he could not see the angel in the path, whereas his donkey could. As Balaam does not refer to God allowing his journey in his apology of vv.33-34, even though threatened with death by the angel, the story of Balaam and the Angel seems to be

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4   Day, Adversary 60-61, thinks that the story of Balaam and the Angel, which overtly ridicules the heathen diviner, stems from a much later hand than the framing narrative, which might be identified as part of the P-source. Rouillard, L'ânesse 238, considers the story of Balaam and the Angel a clearly separate entity which cannot be attributed to the traditional sources of the Yahwist or the Elohist.

5   See Budd, Numbers 256-257; Milgrom, Numbers 468-469; Ashley, Book 434-435; Klein, Segnen 24. Vuilleumier, Bileam 154, considers the saddling of the donkey in v.21 as the starting point of the interpolated story of Balaam and the Angel.
     Contra Schüle, Sohn 50-51, who differentiates between the permission for Balaam to go with the Moabite chieftains and the remaining doubt about his motivation, i.e. whether or not he wants to say what God's will is. Therefore, the story with the angel might represent serious doubt about Balaam's behaviour. Weise, Segnen 200-208, also considers the Balaam narrative a literary unit, whereby all inconsistencies can be explained by means of narratology.

a secondary addition deriving from a separate source.[6] It is clearly a negative portrayal of Balaam serving to mock diviners like him, since elsewhere even ordinary mortals are able to see divine messengers.[7] Although the anger of God over Balaam's following the Moabite men seems to contradict the divine order given in v.20,[8] divine permission resumes in v.35,[9] betraying the story of Balaam and the Angel as a later interpolation that does not pay due attention to the awkward logic created by this addition. Perhaps the redactor intended to add, with this augmentation, the topic of divine testing to the text.[10] In that case,

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6   However, there are also good reasons for understanding the story with the angel to be a later correction to the Balaam narrative. Redactional alterations discernable only in the surrounding narrative point to the conclusion that there never was a separate source with Balaam and the Angel, see Bartelmus, Eselinnen 35. Perhaps this story was compiled to install Balaam as a true prophet, since the author used significant words and themes from the legitimizing formula in Num 24:3-4 and 15-16.

7   For the negative appraisal of Balaam in this story see Rouillard, Péricope 116; Vuilleumier, Bileam 160; Levine, Numbers 138-139; Achenbach, Vollendung 403. According to Milgrom, Numbers 469, the story of Balaam and the Angel humiliates Balaam in many ways. This was also recognized by the Midrashim. Balaam's claims (prophetic sight, speech, knowledge of God, wisdom) are plainly contradicted by the story. Similarly Seters, Prophet 132: "The talking ass story is the final degradation of the faithful prophet into a buffoon who must be instructed by his own humble donkey". According to Noort, Zieners 44, the negative picture of Balaam was caused by the search for true criteria to determine who is a prophet in the seventh century BCE. Knierim / Coats, Numbers 261, consider the fable an anti-legend highlighting the negative virtue of the prophet.
     Contra Schüle, Sohn 64-65, who sees the topic of obedience as crucial for the story of Balaam and the donkey, giving this episode a dramatic-tragic colouring. Similarly Schmitt, Mantiker 253, who thinks that this story intends to transform the heathen mantic Balaam to a prophet of יהוה.

8   Schmidt, Bileam 339-340, points out that this story contradicts God's permission for Balaam to follow the Moabite chieftains in Num 22:20-21. He thinks that it is unlikely that a later redactor has inserted the story of Balaam and the Angel into an earlier Balaam narrative; this would be out of keeping with later sensibilities as there is no evidence elsewhere that God becomes angry when someone obeys his commands. See also Schmidt, Buch 123. According to Graupner, Elohist 160-161, this contradiction indicates two different descriptions of the plot. Levin, Jahwist 387-388, solves this inconsistency by assigning the account of Num 22:13-20 to a secondary redaction.
     Kellenberger, Jahwes 70-71, mentions other narratives that describe a rather arbitrary and almost incomprehensible attitude of God. Similarly Moore, Balaam 101, detects "a perplexing propensity for reversal" within the Balaam narrative. According to Bellinger, Leviticus 265, this narrative affirms "the divine mystery and the warning not to presume on God's favor".

9   Milgrom, Numbers 469, considers v.35 a repetitive resumption repeating vv.20-21.

10   For the story of Balaam and the Angel as a case of testing, see Staubli, Bücher 300-301; Klein, Segnen 28.

the apparent contradiction could be resolved by viewing God's words in v.20 as ironic and seeking to teach Balaam a lesson.[11]

In addition to different designations being used for God within the Balaam narrative, a מלאך יהוה is mentioned only in the story about the angel.[12] The מלאך יהוה usually has the function of a messenger, as can be shown etymologically by its dependence on the root לאך ("to send"). However, in Num 22 the angel is sent as a threat;[13] its message here is to prevent Balaam from carrying out his intentions. The angel is clearly distinguished from יהוה, so it cannot be a temporary manifestation of God.[14] The variant idiom מלאך אלהים is not used here, although this title is widespread within the Hebrew Bible (especially in connection with non-Israelites) and can also be used in the plural form unlike מלאך יהוה [15].

3. The Story

The story of Balaam and the Angel will now be described in chronological order, verse by verse, to show the texture of the skilfully narrated passage and to better appreciate the import of certain phraseology.

In v.22 the anger of God is kindled when Balaam goes to Balak. The anger formula (חרה אף – widespread in the Bible – is used thrice in the Balaam narrative and functions as a structuring device:[16] First God's anger is kindled, then Balaam's and finally Balak's. Thus, this idiom connects the story of Balaam and the Angel to the wider context. The

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11 See Moberly, Learning 9-10. Weise, Segnen 106, explains the apparent contradiction through the use of the prepositions. Balaam goes with the Moabite messengers (expressed with עם) in contrast to God's permission to go with them (expressed with את). Thus, he makes common cause with them. This distinction based on the usage of the prepositions is problematic. For example, the presence of God with someone ("Beistandsformel") can be expressed with both prepositions, see e.g. Gen 39:3 or 1Sam 18:12. Sakenfeld, Numbers 126, supposes that Balaam secretly hoped that God's mind had changed.

12 Num 22:22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 31, 32, 34, 35.

13 See Seebass, Engel 583-584. According to Achenbach, Vollendung 404, the Angel of יהוה is used in the Pentateuch when the people are not (yet) ready for a direct revelation from יהוה, either due to their provenance or their state of knowledge.

14 Ashley, Book 455. Contra Davies, Numbers 250; Bellinger, Leviticus 267.

15 See Gen 21:17; 28:12(pl); 31:11; 32:3(pl); Exod 14:19; Judg 6:20; 13:6, 9; 1Sam 29:9; 2Sam 14:17, 20; 19:28; 2Chr 36:16.
    The variant מלאך יהוה is used in Gen 16:7, 9, 10, 11; 22:11, 15; Exod 3:2; Num 22:22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 31, 32, 34, 35; Judg 2:1, 4; 5:23; 6:11, 12, 21, 22(bis); 13:3, 13, 15, 16(bis), 17, 18, 20, 21(bis); 2Sam 24:16; 1Kgs 19:7; 2Kgs 1:3, 15; 19:35; 1Chr 21:12, 15, 16, 18, 30; Ps 34:8; 35:5, 6; Isa 37:36; Hag 1:13; Zech 1:11, 12; 3:1, 5, 6; 12:8; Mal 2:7.

16 See Num 22:22, 27; 24,10.

cast consists of Balaam riding on his donkey and his two servants (נעריו ושני),[17] whereas the Moabite messengers are not mentioned. It is not said whether the numerous Moabite chieftains of v.15 (שׂרים רבים), who are also called servants or chieftains of Balak in v.18 and v.35 (בלק עבדי/שׂרי) and chieftains of Moab in v.21 (שׂרי מואב), are also part of the entourage. This is just one point of tension which sets this story apart from the context. Most probably the mention of two servants is a literary stereotype signifying Balaam as a person of eminence, who would usually have been accompanied by two servants.[18] Conspicuously, Balaam's servants quit the scene after their unexpected appearance, whereas the chieftains of Moab/Balak appear both in v.21 and v.35 – in that respect framing the story of the encounter with the angel –, but play no role in the embedded narrative. On the other hand, the story in Num 22:21-35 is advanced by יהוה, the Angel of יהוה, the donkey and Balaam. As the Moabites are not important for the plot, the storyteller could readily dismiss them and concentrate on the main characters. יהוה and the Angel of יהוה are in full control of the narrated events, whereas the donkey and Balaam are only reacting.[19] The Angel of יהוה, who appears ten times in the Balaam narrative,[20] takes his stand on the road to hamper the way of the travellers (יצב-tD). In virtue of Num 23:3, 15 and other occurrences, this verb cannot denote a total blocking of the way.[21] Thus, the first time the angel blocks their path, it is still possible to change course. The angel acts as an opponent of Balaam. The word שׂטן refers not to an opposing figure in the heavenly court like in Zech 3 and Job 1-2, but to an ordinary adversary.[22]

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17 Achenbach, Vollendung 403, considers the mention of the two servants as indication of the fragmentary status of the story of Balaam and the Angel. Bartelmus, Eselinnen 38 n.33 regards the two servants as a later gloss. In Num 24:12 they are called messengers sent by Balak (מלאכיך, perhaps in opposition to the angel sent by the Lord (מלאך יהוה).

18 Milgrom, Numbers 190; Cole, Numbers 390; Schmidt, Buch 133. In this regard, one can refer to Gen 22 and 1Sam 28. Similarly Weise, Segnen 101 n.80. According to Staubli, Bücher 300, this is an ironic underscoring of the supposed importance of Balaam. Budd, Numbers 266, points out that these servants are identified as Jannes and Jambres by the Palestinian Targum.

19 It is יהוה who opens the mouth of the donkey and the eyes of Balaam.

20 See Num 22:22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 31, 32, 34, 35.

21 יצב-tD + ב is also used in Exod 1:17; Deut 31:14; 1Sam 10:23; 2Sam 21:5; 23:12; 1Chr 11:14. It most probably denotes "to stand ostensibly on sth.", in which case the tD-stem is interpreted as imitative ("to play the status of the verb's meaning"). For this function of the tD-stem see Irsigler, Einführung 93. According to Levine, Numbers 155, יצב-tD elsewhere describes "the posture of divine beings in theophany" or "attendance upon divine beings".

22 See Sakenfeld, Numbers 127; Schmidt, Buch 133. In that respect, Levine, Numbers 155, thinks that the noun שׂטן is typical of the diction of late pre-exilic historical

In v.23 the angel is described as a great danger to the travellers. The donkey sees the angel standing in the road with his sword drawn in his hand. The angel is further described by the nominal clause (וחרבו שלופה בידו). This idiom is a familiar way to describe either the Angel of the Lord or the chieftain of the heavenly army.[23] Apparently, heavenly messengers are sometimes armed and can cause fear and prostration as well. From a synchronic perspective the Angel of the Lord could be interpreted here as the chieftain of the heavenly army like in Josh 5:13-14. Thus, he is not a mere messenger but a high-ranking commander who has the power to command the heavenly host. In that respect he is not a single soldier, rather he is endowed with divine might. This dreadful appearance awes the donkey so that she turns off the path and into a field.[24] Balaam strikes the donkey, punishing her stubbornness. In this episode the verb נכה is used mainly in the episode with the angel,[25] only at the beginning of the Balaam narrative in Num 22:6 does it refer to the intended beating of Israel when being cursed by Balaam. In the context of the Balaam narrative this verb is always connected with an angry reaction while being blinded to reality (i.e. to Israel's beneficent status or to the Angel of the Lord). The notice in Num 22:6 could perhaps be interpreted in such a way that the beating of Israel is a sin comparable to the impatient and blind reaction of Balaam. In the story with the angel, the professional diviner Balaam – presumably an expert at interpreting omens – is not able to realize, through the peculiar behaviour of his donkey, that the deity has a message for him.[26]

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books, in that it lacks the notion of the determined noun in Zech and Job or the proper name Satan. Moberly, Prophet 10, draws a parallel to 1Kgs 11 where Hadad and Razon are also called adversaries to Solomon. Similarly, the angel is an opposing figure symbolizing divine disfavour. According to Day, Adversary 65, שטן means both "adversary" and "legal opponent". Rouillard, Péricope 120-121, regards the angel as having the function of an obstacle, but not as the opponent in and of itself.

23 This idiom is used in Num 22:23, 31 and in Josh 5:13; 1Chr 21:16. According to Gross, Bileam 349, this expression is not a "formelhaftes oder vorgeprägtes Attribut des mal'ak". Levine, Numbers 156, uses this idiom to date the story of Balaam and the Angel (late pre-exilic or early postexilic). Similarly Schmitt, Mantiker 251-252. Day, Adversary 64, thinks that the sword-wielding messenger could also be interpreted as שטן in the other accounts.

24 נטה-G + מן + דרך is used only here and in Job 31:7. In both cases it denotes the meaning "to turn away from the road". נטה-G + מן is also found in Num 22:33 and Prov 4:5 with the same connotation. The root נטה is used six times in the Balaam narrative, mostly in G-stem, see Num 22:23, 26, 33(bis). Only in Num 22:23 is it used with the double accusative in H-stem "to bring back so. to sth." and in Num 24:6 in N-stem with the meaning "to stretch afar". According to Levine, Numbers 156, this verb displays two aspects: transitive and stative.

25 See Num 22:23, 25, 27, 28, 32.

26 Wenham, Numbers 170-171.

According to vv.24-25, the angel stands[27] in the narrow path among the vineyards so that the entourage could hardly pass by. As in the first encounter, the donkey sees[28] the angel and squeezes herself against the wall. The fearful reaction of the donkey evokes the anger of the still blinded Balaam whose foot was scraped against the wall by the donkey, most probably when trying to dodge the angelic obstacle.[29] And again Balaam struck the donkey. This is expressed by the modifying verb יסף, which stands in prominent places within the Balaam narrative and denotes continuation and intensification.[30]

In v.26 the angel moves and completely blocks the path, leaving no room to pass by on either side. Seeing the Angel of the Lord the donkey realizes that it is impossible to pass by and, according to v.27, she lies down under Balaam. The verb רבץ, when used with the donkey, does not have the specialized meaning "to prostrate", and lacks any cultic connotations.[31] It seems that the story unfolds by progressively moving from an ordinary road to a path through a vineyard to a narrow part of the path which is now blocked so that it is not possible for the donkey to pass by. Therefore, she has to lie down and await further instructions. It is apparent that the angel lured Balaam into a trap and finally into an inevitable confrontation.[32] The obstinate behaviour of the don-

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27 This is expressed with עמד-G which appears in Num 22:24, 26 and is different from Num 22:23 נצב-N, the first blocking of the road by the angel. According to Levine, Numbers 157, this verb denotes "to halt" and creates a contrast with עבר "to pass by". Kellenberger, Widerstand 71, thinks that עבר is a "Theophaniebegriff" and characterizes the story as an experience of divine revelation. Contra Bartelmus, Ese linnen 38 n.34. The verb עבר has a multitude of denotations, making a restriction to a special meaning unnecessary.

28 ראה + אתון + מלאך יהוה is used in a parallel expression in Num 23:23, 25, 27. All three times, the donkey sees the angel opposing Balaam and therefore protects Balaam from the armed Angel of the Lord. This idiom is also used in the speech of the angel who, furthermore, threatens Balaam and points out that only the donkey has safeguarded Balaam.

29 לחץ-N, which is only used here, is most probably to be interpreted as reflexive due to the usage of this verb in G-stem to govern a direct object in the same verse.

30 See Num 22:15 with the second attempt to engage Balaam as a sorcerer, Num 22:19 with the second inquiry of Balaam towards God, Num 22:25 with Balaam's second beating of the donkey, and Num 22:26 with the angel's second blocking of the path (which is actually the third appearance of the angel standing in the path). According to Moberly, Learning 7 n.16, the verb יסף usually denotes continuation and augmentation.

31 Normally it describes animals lying down to rest or the crouching of a mule under a heavy burden. Thus, there is no clear subtlety in the author's description, contra Levine, Numbers 156. It may refer to the donkey crouching down and awaiting a command from the angel.

32 See especially Levine, Numbers 157.

key crosses Balaam and he strikes her a third time.[33] There is apparently an escalation in the reactions of Balaam: in v.23 he strikes the donkey to get her back on the road, in v.25 he strikes her again – expressed with יסף – but with no special purpose and in v.27 he strikes her with his stick.[34]

However, according to v.28, יהוה is in complete control of the situation. He opens[35] the mouth of the donkey, which, after the story of the serpent in Gen 3, is the second time an animal speaks to human beings in the Bible, though this time with positive connotations. Unlike Gen 3, the donkey does not possess the power of speech by herself. In vv.28-30 the donkey accuses Balaam of striking her three times without just cause and defends her overall loyalty to her master, whereas Balaam thought he was being made a fool and threatened to kill the donkey with a sword.[36] The stubborn desire of Balaam to kill the animal corresponds to the subsequently revealed intent of the angel to kill Balaam himself. Due to his blindness Balaam was at risk of losing his life, all the while complaining about the loyal animal that was protecting him. Only after the discussion with the donkey is Balaam forced to admit that her behaviour was quite unusual, as she had always been absolutely reliable before. As a distinguished seer he should have recognized the behaviour of his donkey as unusual. In this respect, the story criticises the blindness of a seer who does not apprehend the obvious. It is noteworthy that the donkey merely reminds Balaam of her lifelong

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33 Like in v.22 anger is kindled (חרה אף), but now it is not יהוה's. For the parallel between both verses see Weise, Segnen 102-103.

34 The noun מקל is determined, which is noteworthy since the stick was not mentioned before. Levine, Numbers 157, apparently thinks that Balaam has struck his donkey three times, each time harder than the last, with his walking stick which would usually have been made of wood. All in all, the use of a stick is an indication of his mounting anger and apparently conveys escalation, see Sherwood, Numbers 176. Milgrom, Numbers 191, supposes that he previously struck the donkey with his hand or a strap.
   Milgrom, Numbers 190, considers the stick a surrogate for a sword. Moore, Balaam 103, holds מקל as a "riding crop, not as a magical source of power". For this word see also Ashley, Book 452 n.4.

35 The verb פתח is mentioned only here, whereas the verb גלה is used to express the opening of the eyes of Balaam in Num 22:31; 24:4, 16. This might be due to the usual usage insofar as פתח-G is never used with עין. For a comparison of the speaking donkey with the snake in Gen 3, see Savran, Speech 33-55; Seebass, Numeri 52. According to Levin, Jahwist 387, the donkey's speaking is a secondary element.

36 This may be meant to resemble the angel with a drawn sword in v.23 and 31. Douglas, Wilderness 221, regards Balaam's reaction as absurd since killing the donkey is not proportionate to her making a fool of him.

loyal service to him, whereas יהוה allows Balaam to see.[37] The impeding threat of the angel is not communicated to Balaam by his donkey.

In v.31 יהוה opens Balaam's eyes so that he can see the angel with a drawn sword (as in v.23). This is in accord with Exod 4:11, where יהוה is credited with making humans dumb or deaf and sighted or blind.[38] Immediately Balaam understands the situation, bows down and prostrates himself before the angel. The verbs used in this verse often appear in a cultic context, so one may also assume such connotations here.[39] The angel now explains everything to Balaam in vv.32-33, maintaining that he would have killed Balaam but not the donkey if she had not turned aside. The accusation of the donkey is renewed, but also enhanced in that the angel refers to the donkey's ability to see (an ability which fortunately saved Balaam's life) in contrast to the blindness of Balaam.[40] Moreover, due to the use of the same idioms, it is as though Balaam's beating the donkey has affected the angel himself.[41]

The angel primarily uses idioms which appear frequently throughout the story of Balaam and the Angel: הרג, דרך, שטן, שלש רגלים, נכה אתון and נטה ל/מפני.[42] However, this is of no help for literary criticism, since

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37 Levine, Numbers 157, argues that the donkey appeals to Balaam's gratitude and that the angel enlightened Balaam. However, neither of these notions can be sustained by the text. It seems to be an overinterpretation of the text when one accords the expression "three times" a certain subtlety which would refer to annual pilgrimage festivals making Balaam's mission one undertaken at divine command. Contra Levine, Numbers 158.

38 According to Wagner, Elemente 90, the opening of Balaam's eyes is a theophany initiated by God and revealing God's hitherto unknown presence. Cole, Numbers 394, points out that Balaam has now encountered God during the daytime. This can be seen as a development, since he previously encountered God only at night.

39 See עין + גלה-G/D in Num 22:31; 24:4, 16; Ps 119:18. According to Schmidt, Bileam 340, this expression implies that Balaam has visionary qualities only once יהוה has opened his eyes.
    קדד and חוה-Št are a familiar idiom for "to bow down and prostrate", see Gen 24:26, 48; 43:28; Exod 4:31; 12:27; 34:8; Num 22:31; 1Sam 24:9; 28:14; 1Kgs 1:16, 31; 1Chr 29:20; 2Chr 29:30; Neh 8:6. It can be used in cultic and ordinary contexts. For the root חוה-Št, see also Levine, Numbers 158-159.
    Even ראה + מלאך-G is a fixed idiom, see Num 22:23, 25, 27, 31; Judg 6:22; 1Chr 21:16, 20.

40 See Knierim / Coats, Numbers 256.

41 Bartelmus, Eselinnen 39.

42 נכה אתון in Num 22:23, 25, 27, 28, 32 (twice with ePP);
    שלש רגלים in Num 22:28, 32, 33;
    שטן in Num 22:22, 32;
    דרך in Num 22:22, 23 (tris), 26, 31, 32, 34;
    הרג in Num 22:29, 33;
    נטה ל/מפני in Num 22:23, 33 (bis).

this peculiarity only stresses the tightly-knit nature of this account and the literary skill of its author. The angel also explains to Balaam that he had come forth as שָׂטָן. In the angel's judgement, Balaam's journey was undertaken too hastily, without first sincerely consulting יהוה.[43] In that respect, the angel acts as legal opponent, charging Balaam with undertaking his journey without divine consent.

Balaam admits in v.34 that he has sinned (חטא), but he excuses[44] his sin by maintaining that he did not know about the angel standing in the road. The verb ידע – also a structuring device within the story – is first used by Balak, who knows about the effectiveness of Balaam's speech; later this verb is employed in reference to the realization of God's will and the presence of the angel.[45] Furthermore, Balaam will refrain from going to Balak if this displeases the angel (רע בעיניך).

The angel allows Balaam to go with the chieftains of Balak in v.35, but he is only to deliver the word given by the angel. This last command differs from v.38, where God, not the angel (who disappears after Num 22:35 without further reference), gives Balaam a prophecy in his mouth.[46] Thus, the word given by the angel could be an indication that the angel is a manifestation of God. Even the formula רע בעיניך

The verb ירט, however, remains elusive as it occurs only in Job 16:11-12, and there only tentatively, see Levine, Numbers 159. Based on the versions Lapsley, Exegesis 25, interprets this word as "perverse". Similarly Budd, Numbers 266. For Ashley, Book 453 n.9, the MT is textually corrupt.

43 See Day, Adversary 65-66, although the interpretation of ירט is a crux interpretum. For a meaning of "to rush headlong" like its Arabic cognate see Greene, Balaam 26. Similarly Weise, Segnen 104. Douglas, Wilderness 217, considers Balaam's „obedience to the will of God a set of lies". Balaam still tries to get the promised fee for cursing Israel. Knierim / Coats, Numbers 262, refer especially to the weakness of Balaam and his willingness to curse Israel for money which ultimately led to an ironic result. North, Sanctions 205-206, also thinks that Balaam had his price. Brown, Message 209, also assumes that Balaam "thought he might make a small fortune by telling Balak things he wanted to hear" for he initially relied on correctly performing rituals to manipulate deities.

44 The first כי seems best explained as adversative "but I did not know that". The use of the verb ידע is most probably a pun on Num 24:16 which claims that Balaam obtains knowledge from God, see Milgrom, Numbers 192.
   According to Wagner, Elemente 90-91, the sin committed by Balaam refers not to moral misconduct but to culpable blindness, whereas Greene, Balaam 26-27, renders the verb חטה as a legal term indicating the breach of a previously agreed upon covenantal relationship.

45 See Num 22:6 and Num 22:19, 34; Num 24:16.

46 Schmidt, Bileam 340-341, thinks that Balaam went home after the encounter with the angel in the original account of the story (which he assigns to a Yahwistic source). This is allegedly found in v.37 where Balak goes to Balaam to hire him again. However, Gross, Bileam 25-129; Schmitt, Mantiker 250-251; and Seebass, Numeri 29, have already convincingly refuted this theory.

might indicate that the angel acts on behalf of God, since this idiom is most often connected with God (רע בעיני יהוה). However, the angel and יהוה are clearly differentiated in Num 22:22-35, so they cannot be identified there. Moreover, v.35 is a slightly altered repetition of v.20. Its appearance in the mouth of the angel is due to redactional work, but is not intended to identify God and the angel. The other formula (רע בעיניך) could be explained by a misunderstanding of Balaam himself, who attributes divine qualities to the angel, as is demonstrated by his prostration. Thus, the angel and God must be differentiated in this account, giving the angel the role of merely an instrument used by God to accomplish his aims.

4. Conclusion

The narrative of Balaam and the Angel is clearly a prophetic story belonging to the genre of „divine testing of a prophet". The angel – invisible to Balaam at first – and the talking donkey are devices used to illustrate the abilities and disabilities of a true prophet. This episode reveals a lesson for Balaam and for every real prophet. In that respect, the tale of the donkey seems to be a testing of the prophet and thus comparable to other prophetic accounts. After the encounter with the angel Balaam is allowed not only to do (עשׂה), but to speak (דבר) God's will,[47] allowing him to act as a true prophet of God.

However, this narrative demonstrates only one way of coming into contact with the divine sphere. Within the final form of the Balaam narrative, even more modes of divine communication are introduced: Balaam gets in touch with the divine sphere by an encounter with God and God's Angel, by an audition, by consulting omens and finally by a "real" vision. Thus, there is a certain progression and dynamic in the way Balaam receives the message of God. All modes of divine communication in the Balaam narrative are subservient to the will of יהוה and can even be given to a non-Israelite diviner who is labelled as a worshipper of יהוה.[48]

All in all, the story has a lot of folkloristic details like the talking animal, the angel, the naive anti-hero and the overall narrative structure.[49] Furthermore, the narrative of the angel is a story of many contrasts sustaining one major point: prophetic sightedness or blindness

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47   Bartelmus, Eselinnen 41-42.
48   This is apparently a later literary stage in the Balaam tradition, see the remarks in Gass, Stern 261-263.
49   See Staubli, Bücher 301.

are the domain of God alone and cannot be controlled by man. More-over, the story of Balaam and the Angel has a certain comic element.[50] Apparently this story was the starting-point of the biblical and extra-biblical portrayal of Balaam as an infamous blind and evil seer.

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50   The renowned seer does not see the angel whereas the donkey does. Balaam is vio-lent and incensed whereas the donkey is loyal and intelligent. Concerning the comic element, see especially Douglas, Wilderness 221: "broad slapstick"; Davies, Num-bers 247; "comic irony". For a comparison between the donkey, Balaam and Balak see North, Sanctions 211-212.

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The Angel in Samson's Birth Narrative
Judg 13

ERIK EYNIKEL, NIJMEGEN

Angels play a renewed role in today's secularised society because the so-called New Age movement shows a new interest in esotericism and produces therefore all kinds of esoteric literature. Angels and other spiritual creatures are important in this flow of ideas as "sacred messengers of Wisdom, who bring the seekers of truth and goodness to completion of their path".[1]

Angels are only one medium among many in these writings. Beside angels there are elves, devas, spirits, … all different names for (similar?) celestial messengers.[2] A characteristic definition of angels in New Age is offered by Petra Angelika Peick:

> "Engel sind lebendige, energetische Wesen in einer immateriellen, geistigen Wirklichkeit, die parallel zur immateriellen Realität jenseits unserer sinnlichen Wahrnehmung existieren. Sie sind unabhängige Intelligenzen, die sich um die Bewusstseinsentwicklung einzelner Menschen und der gesamten Menschheit bemühen".[3]

The New Age man practices spiritual and mystical exercises, which according to some allow communication with the angels. The more experienced among New Age adherents even succeed, through meditation, in lifting their consciousness to a higher aura, even to the aura of angels and other spiritual beings.

The attractiveness of this esoteric "angelology" is that it responds to the human need for security and protection and at the same time fulfils people's longing for freedom and self-determination. Angels are attractive for these modern people because they represent the "missing link" between the modern pursuit for independence and the pre-modern resignation to fate, two human qualities that make us liable to anxiety.

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1   Newhouse, Engel 7.
2   See Dalichow, Comeback 25.
3   Peick, Engel 27.

Someone who in meditation can become 'like an angel in heaven' can at least for a short time overcome this fear.[4]

The modern concept of angels described above is, according to New Age authors, based on biblical texts in which angels occur as intermediary between God and humans or more generally between the transcendent and the immanent. But as we will see there is a big difference between angels as they occur in the Bible and the concept of angels in modern esoteric literature. To make this clear in the first part of this article we will therefore describe in general terms the concept of angels in the Old Testament.[5] This will allow us in the second part to situate the concept and function of the angel in the story of Samson's annunciation. Finally we will return to the modern concept and compare it with the biblical concept and check what is the relationship, if any, between them.

1. Angels in the Old Testament

1.1 Divine messengers (angels) and human envoys.

A problem in defining angels in the Old Testament is that there is no distinctive Hebrew word for the English word "angel". The English word "angel" is of course derived from the Greek ἄγγελος, which translates the Hebrew מלאך with the basic meaning "messenger." But this Hebrew word and its Greek counterpart ἄγγελος can refer to human as well as to divine messengers; the difference between these two can only be deduced from the context. It is only in Latin that the distinction between human and divine messengers is made clear in the language: the human agent is called *nuntius*, the divine messenger *angelus*.

That an angel in the Old Testament is an envoy with a divine message does not distinguish him from e.g. prophets and priests, who are also sometimes called messengers (cf. Hag 1:13: "Haggai, the messenger, מלאך, of the LORD"; Mal 2:7: "For the lips of a priest should guard

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4   Dalichow, Comeback 27, formulates it as follows: "Engel sind greifbarer und vertrauenerweckender als ein weit entfernter und – durch die Kirchen hindurchgefiltert – als grausam und strafend erscheinender Gott. Engel scheinen für viele eine tiefe, innerlich akzeptable Zwischenlösung zu sein zwischen der Religion, die ihnen durch Erziehung und Gesellschaft noch in den Knochen sitzt, und einer freien Spiritualität, auf deren Glatteis zu begeben sie sich noch nicht so recht trauen".

5   See Fabry / Freedman / Willoughby, מלאך, 888-904; Newsom, Angels 248-253; Gruson, Anges 45-53.

knowledge, and people should seek instruction from his mouth, for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts"). Priests and especially prophets act and speak in the name of God, who is their commissioner. The use of the messenger formula: "Thus says the LORD" and "oracle of the Lord" demonstrates how the messengers are almost identified with their messages while their personality shifts to the background. It is not the messenger who speaks or acts but his commissioner through the messenger's words and deeds. It is therefore not strange that biblical language had no interest in distinguishing between a human and a heavenly messenger because the messenger usually did not profile himself.[6] The focus on the content of the message instead of the messenger is already visible in the Semitic root *l'k*, that is not used in the Old Testament but in Ugaritic and Punic with the basic meaning "to mediate a message".[7] At the moment of mediation, the messenger identifies himself with the commissioner but this is purely functional and temporary: he speaks "in the name of" the commissioner and represents him at the very moment of delivering his message. This functional identification guarantees the authenticity of the message.[8] Thus the message is usually couched in terms where first person forms ("I") refer to the commissioner, not to the messenger. Since *l'k* means a task or chore in general, and since the messenger does not profile himself it is possible, at least in Hebrew, that a *ml'k* may be an "errand boy" rather than specifically a "messenger."

Consequently, the identification of the messenger with his message is for human and heavenly (angelic) messengers alike. What distinguishes human from heavenly messengers is first of all the "space" from where they come: angels come from God's domain while human messengers live on earth. Prophets, who speak in God's name, can in a visionary experience be present in the heavenly court (Isa 6; 1Kgs 22:19) but they do not belong there. Angels on the contrary constitute the heavenly court, at least that is how passages like Isa 6 and Job 1 are understood; although מלאך is not used in these contexts, Isa 6 mentions the שרפים and Job 1 the בני אלהים for the members of heavenly court.

A second, more important distinction between angels and human messengers is that angels are less independent beings than the human messengers. Although in principle all messengers' personalities fade away when they execute their mission, in a few cases the human mes-

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6   There are a few exceptions e.g. the messenger mentioned in Prov 13:17; furthermore there is Micaiah in 1Kgs 22:13 and the priest Mal 2:7. It always concerns human messengers.

7   Fabry / Freedman / Willoughby, מלאך, 888-904.

8   Cf. Cunchillos, Étude 49-51.

sengers act autonomously. In 1Kgs 22:13 the messenger who had gone to summon Micaiah said to him, "Look, the words of the prophets with one accord are favourable to the king; let your word be like the word of one of them, and speak favourably". This was not part of the messenger's assignment. And in Mal 2:7 the prophet reproaches the priests: "For the lips of a priest should guard knowledge, and people should seek instruction from his mouth, for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts". Obviously these human messengers even act against the will of their commissioner.

Angels never act against God – at least in the Old Testament literature – because they are an extension of God himself. Often they are called מלאך יהוה and מלאך אלהים.

1.2 The angels' task

Angels understandably mediate messages to humans. In the later Old Testament literature they also deliver messages to prophets who then proclaim them to the people of Israel (cf. Zech 1:9-6:5 where an angel is in conversation with Zechariah).

But the angel's task is not limited to the mediation of messages: angels also bring salvation to Israel: an angel goes in front of the Israelites to guard them on the way from Egypt and to bring them to the place that God has prepared (Exod 14:19; 23:20-23; 32:34; Num 20:16). An angel stops Balaam (Num 22:22), helps Elijah out (1Kgs 19:5-8) and defeats Israel's enemies (2Kgs 19:35 // Isa 37:36). The angel is the agent of God's aid for Israel. Although the actions of angels often rouse the Israelites' fear, he is not their enemy but their saviour. In the blessing of Joseph God and his angel are even equated: "The God before whom my ancestors Abraham and Isaac walked, the God who has been my shepherd all my life to this day, the angel who has redeemed me from all harm, bless the boys; and in them let my name be perpetuated, and the name of my ancestors Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude on the earth" (Gen 48:15-16). Therefore to be compared with an angel involves high praise, especially when it is said that one possesses the wisdom of an angel (1Sam 29:9; 2Sam 14:17, 20).

Only once does an angel act against the people of Israel. In 2Sam 24 the angel executes a punishment because David carried out a census. Therefore God let a pestilence grow rampant among the people. This pestilence is spread by an angel of destruction: "when the angel stretched out his hand toward Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD relented concerning the evil, and said to the angel who was bringing

destruction among the people, 'It is enough; now stay your hand'" (2Sam 24:16). The parallel version in 1Chr 21 states more explicitly that God sent the angel to destroy; on the other hand that version avoids naming God as the initiator of David's census and instead blames Satan for it.

1.3 The "history" of angels in the Old Testament

On the whole the evolution of the appearance of angels in the Old Testament can be grouped in three periods.

1.3.1 The oldest texts

In the Yahwistic texts of the Old Testament the distance between God and human beings is small.[9] Before the sin in the Garden Yahweh is pictured in very anthropomorphic fashion: he walks around in the garden of Eden, looking for where Adam and Eve are hidden.

In the story of the patriarchs the distance between God and humanity is somewhat larger, although still very small. The first text in the Old Testament where an angel occurs is the sending off of Hagar.[10] The angel appears there suddenly but Hagar has no fear, unlike for instance in later New Testament stories (Zechariah in Luke in 1:11-12 and the shepherds in Luke 2:9). Hagar talks with the angel as with a human being; the angel is almost like an acquaintance. When the angel leaves, Hagar reacts: "she named the LORD who spoke to her, 'You are El-roi'; for she said, 'Have I really seen God and remained alive after seeing him?'" It is striking that the difference between God and his angel is almost nonexistent; not only does she identify the angel with God (El-roi) but in Gen 6:11b the subject suddenly shifts from the angel to God himself. Also in the parallel story Gen 21 Elohim hears the boy crying (Gen 21:17), but it is the angel of Elohim who calls Hagar. There can be no doubt that in the encounter with the angel, Hagar meets God

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9   The sources of the Pentateuch are for several decades already fiercely debated. That the Yahwistic source J (if its existence is accepted) is the oldest source of the Pentateuch is no longer a *opinio communis* but nevertheless some texts of the Pentateuch – assigned in the Wellhausenian hypothesis to J– are considered to belong to the oldest texts (see Campbell / O'Brien, Sources).

10 It is striking that angels appear much more often to women than to men in the Bible. In Judg 13 too it is first Samson's mother who meets the angel.

himself. God's message is Hagar's salvation but God must appear as an angel in order to make that message perceptible.

In the well-known story of Abraham receiving the visit of the three men (Gen 18) we have a similar alternation between God (Gen 18:1, 13) and the men (plural 18:2, 9, 16; singular 18:10, 14) although the men are not called angels in Gen 18. In 19:1 when two of the three men leave for Sodom and Yahweh stays behind together with Abraham, the men are called explicitly angels. This mission of three messengers is unique in the Old Testament. The shift from three to one and again to the plural can be understood as the visit of a party of three, consisting of the main visitor Yahweh and his escort consisting of two men (angels), as they are explicitly identified in 19:1.

When we turn to the story of Moses at the burning bush, the identification of God with the angel is even closer (Exod 3:2-6). The angel appears in the burning bush but when he addresses Moses it is Yahweh who is speaking. Moses then hides his face because he is afraid to see God. The relation between the angel of Yahweh and Yahweh himself is so close that they are almost identical. The angel is the "physical" manifestation of Yahweh on earth, but people experience the encounter as meeting God himself.

1.3.2 The pre-exilic period

In a second period the distance between God and humanity enlarges, so that more "space" becomes available for angels as God's aids. This transition is however not abrupt but gradual. In the story of the exodus an angel – as God's assistant – accompanies the people through the wilderness (Exod 14:19; 32:34; Num 20:16). And the oldest servant in Abraham's house gets – according to Abraham – a guardian angel when he seeks a bride for Isaac (Gen 24). But in these stories the angels do not do very much. As in the older phase, they are little more than manifestations of God himself.

However, when we look e.g. to the episodes of Elijah (1Kgs 19:5-7; 2Kgs 1:2-4) we see that the angels act more independently in assisting and serving functions. In 2Kgs 1:3-4 the angel delivers the oracle and God is only mentioned in the messenger formula, but that is because the messenger formula is part of the text of the message Elijah is to deliver. In 2Sam 24:16 and 2Kgs 19:35 the angel executes a punitive

expedition.[11] Angels become intermediate beings between God and people; and are not (only) God's manifestation. Therefore certain honourable people can now be compared with angels (1Sam 29:9; 2Sam 14:17-20; 19:27); angels are now more clearly distinguished from God and comparison with an angel is not the same as comparison with God himself.[12]

This change of function of angels is related to the situation of Israel in the pre-exilic time. The Israelites became aware of their place in the international scene. Yahweh is no longer the migrating companion of the patriarchs or the people in the wilderness. He is the national God who resides in the temple but he is also the God of the entire world.[13] Therefore his dwelling is not limited to the building of the temple. God lives in heaven, as the prophet Micaiah ben Imlah perceived in his vision when he said, "Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, with all the host of heaven standing beside him to the right and to the left of him" (1Kgs 22:19).[14] The larger distance between God and humanity allows for a more independent position of angels as mediators and executors of God's orders.

1.3.3 The post-exilic period

In the vision of Dan 7 God is presented as almost totally transcendent. The clouds of heaven that bring the Son of Man to the Ancient One (Dan 7:13) are a clear border between heaven and earth.[15]

This new perspective of God's dwelling has also influenced the understanding of angels and their function. Angels now belong to the heavenly court and the highest number imaginable at that time were serving God: "A thousand thousands served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood attending him" (Dan 7:10). God has an entire

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11 There is an interesting parallel to this situation in the tenth plague, even though Exodus does not seem to use *mal'ak* in that passage. The death of the firstborn is attributed to Yhwh himself [Exod 11:4; 12:29; 13:15], but there is also a "destroyer" whom Yhwh deals with as an independent being [12:23].)

12 Compare: after the sin in the Garden God stated: "the human being has become like one of us" (Gen 3:22); while in 1Sam 29:9; 2Sam 14:17-20; 19:27 we have a comparison between men and an angel, the intermediate being.

13 I don't claim that in the pre-exilic period there was already an developed *exclusivist* monotheism. Such a monotheism cannot be dated before Second Isaiah

14 Compare also Isaiah 6, the call narrative of Isaiah, which does not mention angels but seraphim.

15 The clouds have the same function in the New Testament at the baptism in the Jordan river (Mark 1), the transfiguration (Mark 9:7) and the ascension (Acts 1:9).

world for himself and consequently the function of the angels shifted again. The distance between God and human beings had become so extensive that God needed a whole legion of servants to fill the gap. If angels were manifestations of God and his aides in the previous periods, they now get an additional function: the *angelus interpres*. God reveals himself to the prophet in visions that need decoding by an angel, so that the prophet can announce the revelation to the people. Especially in Zechariah we find such an angel-interpreter (see Zech 1:9: "The angel who talked with me said to me, 'I will show you what they are'"). Since their role becomes more important, more attention is devoted to their more complex function and individuality; e.g., they are given personal names: Dan 8:15-16 names Gabriel, the angel-interpreter of the vision Daniel received and Dan 10:13, 21; 12:1 knows Michael as a guardian angel for Israel; in Tob 5-6 the angel Raphael accompanies Tobias on his journey. The same angel that had healed Tobit and Sarah in Tob 3:17 and revealed himself as one of the seven angels who stand ready and enter before the glory of the Lord in Tob 12:15. This last information betrays the belief in a hierarchy of angels because seven have access to God's glory, which implies that others have not.

In Dan 3:25 an angel saves the three men Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who were thrown into the furnace of blazing fire; and in Dan 6:22 an angel saves Daniel from the den of lions. According to Dan 13:55 the angel of God will execute the sentence of the attackers of the virginal Susanna. Even prayer on behalf of the people belongs to the function of angels now (Zech 1:12; Job 33:23-26); this is reversing the direction of speech: where angels used to announce God's message to humans, now angels bring human words to God. If we were to continue our research and examine the writings of Qumran, we would find an even more developed angelology with more angels, and new names (Uriel, Sariel, and others) and new functions (such as personal guardian angel of the community members).

2. The Angel in Samson's Birth Narrative

2.1. What is at stake in Samson's Birth Narrative?

The angel and his performance are not a matter of much debate in the exegetical literature. The most debated point of Judg 13 is whether the story is favourable for Manoah's wife or not. It is obvious to all that the woman is the protagonist of the story and not her husband Manoah,

who seems not to believe his wife when she says she received an un-
usual, divine message ("a man of God with the appearance of an angel"
13:6) and who therefore prays to God to meet his messenger personally.
Nor does Manoah trust what his wife says because he asks the messen-
ger about what to do with the boy ("what will be his rule of life – מִשְׁפָּט –
and what is he to do - מַעֲשֵׂהוּ"; 13:12), although his wife had already
reported that, quoting – although not verbatim – the angel's message.

Moreover, when the angel refuses to eat the food offered by
Manoah and suggests that he prepares it as an offering for Yahweh,
Manoah asks the angel for his name while Manoah's wife had earlier
declared that he did not tell his name because his appearance was like
"an angel" (13:6). Finally when the angel went up to heaven and did
not appear again to Manoah and his wife, *he* finally understands what
his wife had already presumed from the beginning: they were dealing
with an angel. But even then he draws the wrong conclusion: "We shall
surely die, for we have seen God" (13:22). Manoah's wife understands
the situation better: "If the LORD had meant to kill us, he would not
have accepted a burnt offering and a grain offering at our hands, or
shown us all these things, or now announced to us such things as
these" (13:23).

The different behaviour of Manoah (timid, uncomprehending, sus-
picious, sceptical, panicking) and his wife (a good woman, rich in vir-
tues, perceptive, dutiful, tactfully refraining from interfering or inter-
rupting Manoah's encounter with the angel), has led to describing
Manoah's wife as "the ideal Israelite woman"[16] or the "model of Israel-
ite womanhood",[17] "counted among the twenty two women that need
to be praised (as Prov 31 does)".[18] Others are not so happy with these
flattering descriptions since they do not do her justice. Although she is
superior to her husband in her interpretation of the events (of the first
and the second appearance) and in the identification of the visitor as an
angel and in reassuring her panicking husband that the mysterious
disappearance of the angel will turn out well since God must have a
plan for them, she is unassuming and self-effacing. "She poses no
threat", writes J. Cheryl Exum, "she does nothing on her own, which is
a trait that patriarchy finds desirable in a woman … She does not chal-
lenge Manoah's authority".[19] Exum holds especially the narrator of
Judg 13 responsible for confining Manoah's wife to her role as the

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16   Crenshaw, Samson 70.
17   Klein, Triumph 120.
18   van Daalen, Simson 91 n. 1, referring to Schechter, Midrash 337, and Ginzberg,
     Legends VI 205
19   Exum, Criticism 79.

mother of Samson. She does not even get a name.[20] Therefore, the narrator of chapter 13 is criticised from a feminist perspective as reinforcing traditional role patterns and the exegetes as Crenshaw of role-reinforcing exegesis. We shall now concentrate, however, on the angel's role in the chapter.

2.2. The angel in Judg 13

The angel is called מלאך יהוה ten times in Judg 13 (13a, 13a, 15a, 16aα.bβ, 17a, 18a, 20aβ, 21 aα.bβ) out of a total of nineteen times in the book of Judges and fifty-eight times in the Hebrew Bible. In v. 6 Manoah's wife calls him "a man of God" איש אלהים with the appearance of "an angel of God" מלאך אלהים. The narrator copies that last designation in v. 9. Why the narrator once mixes the designation of מלאך אלהים with מלאך יהוה is difficult to explain. According to C. Houtman and K. Spronk it is due to the many occurrences of אלהים in the context of v. 9.[21] It is questionable whether this suffices as an explanation for the use of מלאך אלהים since יהוה is also used often in the context. Of the (only) thirteen occurrences of מלאך האלהים in the Old Testament (Gen 21:17; 28:21; 31:11; 32,1 Exod 14:19; Judg 6:20; 13:6, 9; 1Sam 29:9; 2Sam 14:17, 20; 19:28; 2Chr 36:16) only the passages in Judg 6 (about Gideon) and 13 (Samson) mix the designations of מלאך אלהים and מלאך יהוה. These two episodes in Judges are definitely related: the appearance of the angel, the appointment /

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20 Exum, Criticism 79, gives her the name Hazzelponi, the name she received in the rabbinic tradition (Midrash Rabbah to Num 10:5), identifying her with Hazzelponi of 1Chr 4:3. However, the anonymity of the woman is part of the patriarchal character of this text and should not be obscured by giving the woman secondarily a name. Reinhartz, Samson's Mother 156-170, stresses very much that the woman's anonymity and foreknowledge make her similar to the angel. When the woman reports the first divine message to her husband she adds to the words of the angel that the child will be a Nazirite to God from birth *to the day of his death*. The further course of Samson's life and especially his death in the temple of Dagon in Gaza (Judg 16) demonstrate the foreknowledge and the prophetic gift of the woman.

21 Houtman / Spronk, Held 10 n. 8. Houtman / Spronk consequently translate מלאך by "messenger, viewing the translation "angel" as misleading, since iconographic traditions associate that word with images of winged creatures. Only cherubim (Exod. 25:20; 37:9; 1Kgs 6:24, 27; Ezek 18:8, 12, 16, 19, 21) and seraphim (Isa 6:2, 6) have wings. This reasoning creates new confusion since the word Hebrew מלאך refers sometimes to a human messenger and sometimes to a heavenly messenger. By calling the first "messenger" and the latter one "angel" this distinction is made crystal clear. That the angels of the Old Testament in *later* iconographic representations are pictured with wings should not disturb us because these images are also part of the reception history of the biblical texts; they give us insight in the "meaning" that later tradition perceived in the biblical text.

announcement of a saviour, the sacrifice put on the rock and consumed by fire followed by the sudden disappearance of the angel. H.-J. Stipp, who together with many others sees a literary dependency between Judg 13 and Judg 6, also considers the name that the angel gives himself "wonderful" פלאי and the designation of Yahweh "him who works wonders" מפלא לעשות as taken from Judg 6:13.[22] However, that Judg 6 also mixes מלאך אלהים and מלאך יהוה does not adequately explain the use of מלאך אלהים by the narrator in 13:9. Possibly the use can be explained from the context: Manoah's wife encountered the angel whom she recognised as a man of God (= prophet), with the appearance of an "angel of God". Then Manoah prays to God to send that man of God again in order to question him about what to do with the child. Thereupon God sends that "angel of God" מלאך אלהים; that is what the woman had assumed he was.[23]

In 13:10, 11 – in the direct speech of Monoah's wife and Manoah respectively – the angel is called "the man". This makes sense since at that point both still considered the angel to be human; he was a "man of God," although an extraordinary one. This was also exactly what Manoah's wife called the messenger when she reported the first encounter to her husband: "A man of God …, and his appearance was like that of an angel of God, most awe-inspiring". The "man of God" that Manoah and his wife had in mind was clearly a prophet. Prophets sometimes were called by the title "man of God" and they announced divine messages and could do miracles (1Sam 2:27; 9:6-10; 1Kgs 12:22; 13; 17; 2Kgs 1; 2:19-22; 3-7). The annunciation of a miraculous pregnancy and birth was not unusual for "a man of God" (2Kgs 4:14-17). Therefore nothing is unusual in the behaviour of Manoah and his wife when they regard the angel as a human messenger from God, a prophet. Manoah's request to God "to send that man of God again" was therefore appropriate.[24] Also understandable was Manoah's request for the man's name, despite the fact that his wife had already

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22   Stipp, Simson 347 n. 35. For the literary dependence of Judg 13 Stipp refers to Kittel, Studien 106; Gressmann, Anfänge 240; Kübel, Epiphanie 225-231; Zakovitch Sacrifice 151-154. For the assumption that the self designation of the angel as "wonderful" is also taken from Judg 6, Stipp refers to Bartelmus, Heroentum 92. Stipp also refers to an alternative explanation for the origin of the name פלאי: Grimm, Name 92-98, explains that the name originally referred to a Canaanite cultic place of *Baal pel'iy*. This was then altered to a Yahwistic installation and the text was adapted accordingly. This hypothesis assumes textual conjectures that, of course, weaken its probability.

23   Redaction critical conclusions on the basis of this terminology (cf. Römheld, Quellen 39-40) are not convincing, see Stipp, Simson 351 n. 48.

24   13:16 explicitly mentions that Manoah didn't know that he was an angel (something his wife has suspected already for a long time but Manoah is slow to understand).

hinted that he would not give it. Manoah assumed that he was dealing with an extraordinary human being, not an angel; his wife assumed that he was an angel and therefore that he would not tell his name.

Whether פֶּלִאי is the name of the angel – as Stipp assumes, see above – is not clear. The NRSV translates הוּא־פֶלִאי as "It is too wonderful". In that case the answer of the angel refers to the unknowable name of God. But even if פֶּלִאי is the name of the angel, it is to be considered an indicator of the "total otherness" of God, i.e. his unknowability.[25]

It was only in the ascension of the angel to heaven in the flame of the offering that Manoah understood that he was not dealing with a human "man of God" but with an angel. His panic then is understandable since no one can see God (or his angel) and stay alive – though, in fact, that traditional threat is never realized in the Hebrew Bible: Moses sees God face to face (Exod 33:11), Jacob has seen God face to face (Gen 32:31) and also Gideon met God in person (Judg 6:22) and notwithstanding they did not die because God intended them for a special mission. In the birth narrative of Samson this is no different, and it is Manoah's wife who understands that better than her husband.[26]

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25 In Gen 32 Jacob also asks for the man's name. The man – later identified by Jacob with God – refuses to give his name but gives Jacob a new name, "Israel." This is often compared with Manoah's request for the angel's name. But apart from these similarities there are also differences: the man of Gen 32 is never called an angel in that text and the story of Gen 32 is a composite text that probably originally was a pre-Israelite aetiology of a local shrine on the Jabbok honouring a Canaanite hero that had overpowered a demon there. See Tucker, Criticism 41-54.

26 Stipp, Simson 353-354, explains the clumsy way that Manoah discovers the true identity of the angel as a result of poor imitation of Judg 6: since in Judg 6 Gideon finds out through the miraculous sacrifice that his guest is an angel, Judg 13 needs to do the same. Manoah and his wife seem in verses 10-12 to have forgotten the numinous character of their guest (see explicitly v. 16) and so the sacrifice can play its role of revealing the true identity of the angelic guest. That Judg 13 is a literary imitation of Judg 6 might well be the case, but I think that Stipp does not consider the narrative development of the text correctly. Manoah and his wife did not know about the identity of the angel before his ascension to heaven. Manoah's wife knew that he was a man of God (she must have thought of a prophet) and he "had the looks of an angel". Manoah was sceptical and therefore prayed God to send the man of God again (nothing about an angel). When the man of God returned Manoah invited him for a meal but the guest refused and suggested that Manoah offer the food as a sacrifice. When Manoah then asked for his name, so that they might honour him, Manoah and his wife still seem to assume that the man of God is a prophet. It is only in the final act of the angel's ascension that they recognize the true identity of their guest. (Cf. E. W. Conrad, Messengers 90, who comments on Judg 13: "Messengers of Yhwh, then appear as human beings in the Hebrew Bible. They are only perceived as 'messengers of YHWH' when they take part in extraordinary activities"). We do not need to assume that Manoah and his wife have "forgotten" anything in the course of the events.

When we now place the performance of the angel in Judg 13 within the general development of the concept of angels in the Old Testament (see part 1), we see that it fits in the series of text that I grouped under the pre-exilic period. The angel as God's messenger bridges the gap between God and humanity. In the older annunciation stories of Ishmael (Gen 16) and Isaac (Gen 18) the celestial visitor is alternately called God and the angel/the man. In Judg 13 the angel is sometimes called angel, sometimes the man of God but never God himself. Only Manoah shouts, "we have seen God" when he recognised the man as an angel (see "Then Manoah realized that it was the angel of the Lord" 13:21). But this is to be understood as "we have seen God's manifestation". God and the angel remain, however, clearly distinguished.

On the other hand, the angel in Judg 13 has no real name (see the discussion of פלאי above). While the angels in the stories of the post-exilic period have names, are quite numerous and have functions in addition to announcing a message, the angel in Judg 13 stays within the traditional frame of the celestial messenger. Therefore, in so far as the performance of the angel is concerned, the allocation of Judg 13 to the group of pre-exilic text is appropriate.

Conclusion

In the first part of this article I referred to the occurrence of angels in modern esoteric literature. There we saw that people try to imitate or even identify themselves with angels in their esoteric endeavours: raising themselves to the level of angels. When we compare this with what the Old Testament says about angels, and in particular Judg 13 we need to conclude that this New Age concept of angels is absolutely not in accordance with Biblical views. Angels in the Old Testament are the manifestations and the messengers of God to human beings, but this is a one-way street. Never can human beings elevate themselves to the level of an angel. When a person is compared with an angel (2Sam 14:17, 20; 19:27) the comparison refers to moral qualities. The Old Testament in general, and Judg 13 in particular, rather disaffirm the possibility of equalling oneself with angels because the angels have precisely the function of bridging the gap between the human world and the transcendent world of God. And when direct contact between these worlds happens as in the encounter of Manoah and his wife with the celestial messenger, the humans fear that they will die because the heavenly and earthly sphere are (or should remain) separated.

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Yhwh's Agents of Doom

The Punishing Function of Angels in Post-Exilic Writings of the Old Testament

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In the Old Testament there are men and messengers who are not ordinary humans, but belong to the divine sphere. The texts either indicate this by attributing them to God (מַלְאַךְ יהוה), or imply it because the actions these characters perform are so powerful that human beings could not accomplish them. Even though the technical term מלאך is not always used early reception history of these writings understood them as divine beings, as "angels". Often they are benevolent, but they may also cause harm and execute punishment at Yhwh's command.

1. Single Destroyers in Narrative Tradition

The most prominent punishing agent probably first coming to mind is the one causing the death of the firstborn in Egypt on the eve of the exodus in the context of the first Passover. In the now canonical text of Exod the death of the firstborn forms the climactic and final one within the series of ten plagues. A closer look at Exod 12 shows that for the most part it is Yhwh himself who strikes down the firstborn[1]. There is only one sentence saying that God will not allow the destroyer (מַשְׁחִית) enter the Israelites' houses to strike (נגף, Exod 12:23). Hence, Exod 12 creates an ambivalent impression: It is God himself who kills the firstborn; at the same time there seems to be a killing agent who is not Yhwh himself, though he is acting at divine command[2].

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1   Especially in Exod 12:29 where God himself is reported to perform the action of striking (נכה); cf. 12: 12 (again with נכה as verb) and 13b (נכה, but note as well the noun מַשְׁחִית). נכה and שׁחת/מַשְׁחִית obviously form a terminology of judgement.

2   In a passage remembering the plagues God sent to the Egyptians Ps 78 mentions a group of destroying angels (מִשְׁלַחַת מַלְאֲכֵי רָעִים "group of messengers/ angels causing evil/ disaster", Ps 78:49).

Things are a bit clearer in 2Kgs 19 (// Isa 37): After Isaiah has pronounced an oracle promising that YHWH will make the besieging Assyrian army withdraw and so save Jerusalem, the narrator informs us that that very night YHWH's angel set out and struck (נכה) 185,000 men in the Assyrian camp (19:35), so that in the morning they all were dead bodies[3]. This made Senacherib withdraw to Nineveh. Here God acts through an agent who is explicitly called מלאך יהוה ("messenger / angel of YHWH")[4]. Again, the verb נכה describes the harming activity causing the death of a great number of non-Israelite persons for the benefit of YHWH's own people.

We find another comparable instance in the narrative about the destruction of Sodom (Gen 19). Again, it is a narrator who introduces two characters, whom Lot receives as guests in his home, and explicitly calls them "messengers" / "angels" (Gen 19:1). Within the episode about the Sodomites' attempt to seize Lot's two guests they just occur as "men" (האנשים, 19:5,7,10)[5]. These "men" (19:12) advise Lot to leave his home because they will destroy (שחת) the place as God sent them to do. At the same time the two "angels" (המלאכים, 19:15) function as guardians of Lot and his family as they urge them to leave and even seize and lead them out of the town (19:16). According to 19:24a, however, it is God himself who effects destruction by raining sulphur and fire on Sodom and Gomorrha. Again, we get a similar ambivalent impression as in Exod 12[6].

In Gen 19 there are characteristics typical of the way God's agents come into narrative texts: They are called "men", that is, their outward appearance is human. On the other hand the narrator designates them as "messengers" / "angels". Their abilities, actions, and functions demonstrate that they have supernatural powers and act on God's behalf. In the canonical text the difference between God and his agents is somehow blurred as the reader feels that God is acting both directly and at the same time indirectly by sending his agents. This ambivalence is a result of the redactional development of the passages. The angel striking a great number of persons may preserve more ancient memories of a belief that deities or demons are responsible for (contagious) disease

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3   2Chr 32:21 gives more activity to God: he sent (שלח) the מלאך and effaces (כחד hif.) the soldiers.

4   Cf. the reference to the event in Sira 48:21 (24) ascribing destruction in the Assyrian camp to God himself and his angel.

5   This episode is regarded as a later addition modelled on Judg 19:22ff., cf. Seebass, Genesis 150. The two "men" strike the Sodomites blind to prevent further aggression. This action may be understood also as a kind of punishment; at the same time it has a symbolic quality.

6   For an outline of the genesis of Gen 19 cf. Ruppert, Genesis 403-409.

or unexpected wholesale slaughter[7]. These deities or demons were de-
prived of their positions and became YHWH's inferior[8]. Thus the two
angels visiting Lot also add an archaic, even fairy-tale ring to the story.
But at the same time this mythological element may be regarded as a
challenge to a monotheistic concept. Therefore, part of the text (proba-
bly the basic layer) evokes the impression that God himself and he
alone carries out the striking[9]. So presumably the idea of divine agents
(re-)entered the texts only when monotheism was firmly established (so
that there appeared to be no danger of polytheistic misunderstanding)
and when YHWH gradually came to be considered a more and more
transcendent deity. By introducing destroying intermediary agents God
himself, though he is commanding them, is no killer, his hands are not
steeped in blood so to speak. It seems as though later generations of
narrators and redactors felt reluctant to make YHWH himself an execu-
tor of bloodshed and death. Therefore, they re-activated mythological
material which had been preserved both in Israel's environment and in
popular religious culture.

So far the agents' activity was directed against foreign people. In
2Sam 24 (cf. 1Chr 21[10]) God punishes his own people by sending pesti-
lence to Jerusalem (ויתן יהוה דבר בירושלים, 2Sam 24:15aα). The next
verse seems to take it for granted that YHWH's messenger / angel brings
about the lethal pestilence, an activity intended to destroy (לשחתה) the
city. However, when the angel starts to infect/touch the people, God
relents and tells the destroying angel to stop (24:16). This rather late
text explicitly identifies YHWH's angel as the one bringing about de-
struction. He is a being not identical with YHWH, but at God's com-
mand. Again, the angel is visible to human beings – David perceives
him, a sight that rouses him to repentance (24:17).

All passages mentioned above have one central feature in common:
they are narrative texts claiming to give an account of historical events
which are, nevertheless, interpreted theologically. This theological per-
spective includes God as an agent in the course of events. In all four
passages it is more or less obvious that YHWH has beings at his disposal
who act at his command and effect destruction of a great number of
people. The agent is mentioned briefly, as in passing. It is a single agent
(only in Gen 19 there are two) identified by the narrator as מלאך, that is
messenger. He is shown operating within the human sphere, and his

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7   Cf. the apotropaic rite of spreading blood on the door frames of the Israelites' houses
     in Egypt.
8   Cf. Duhm, Geister 14f.
9   For a presumable mythological background of Gen 19 cf. Keel, Sodom.
10   For a detailed analysis see the article by P. Beentjes in this volume.

activity aims at destruction (שחת hif.). The activity itself is described as "striking" (נכה). Apart from 2Sam 24 there is ambiguity because destruction is attributed both to God himself and to his agent at the same time. The destroying messenger's relationship to God is clearly a subordinate one. How these divine agents came into being and where they reside remains obscure[11]. In any case God sends these agents to demonstrate his power by harming the Egyptians because Pharao remains unreasonable and hard-hearted and will not let the Israelites go (Exod); to defend Jerusalem against the Assyrian siege and imminent conquest (2Kgs 19), and to punish sin (Gen 19 and 2Sam 24).

2. A Group of Seven Punishing Agents (Ezek 9:1-10:7*)

A more prominent appearance of God's punishing agents is found within the second vision in the Book of Ezekiel (Ezek 8-11). The dating in Ezek 8:1 marks the beginning of a new section in the book. While Ezekiel is in his house in Babylonia with the elders sitting before him (8:1, cf. 14:1; 20:1) he has an extraordinary experience: God's hand carries him away in rapture (8:1b)[12] and Ezekiel is subjected to a visionary experience ("And I beheld, look, there was …", 8:2). First thing he sees is a being somewhat like a fiery appearance reminding of the human-shaped person[13] he saw sitting on the heavenly throne in chapter 1 (1:26bβ,27a) whose loins were identifiable whereas the upper part of the person was not to be seen because of extreme light. This apparition is clearly meant to be God himself[14]. Most critics agree that the phrase is redactional, intended to connect the visions in Ezek 1-3 and 8-11. This man is only mentioned in the introductory line. Next, the humanoid stretches out something in the form of a hand and takes Ezekiel away

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11 Compare however Isa 54:16 where God says: "I have created the destroyer (משחית) in order to ruin (לחבל)". So the agent is clearly God's creature.

12 The introductory phrase also found in 1:3b; 3:22a; 37:1; 40:1b connects Ezekiel's visionary experiences.

13 It is widely agreed that MT's כמראה־אש is to be read כמראה־איש (cf. ἀνδρός in LXX). It is copied from 1:27 where you find the expression twice.

14 Zimmerli, Ezechiel 210, thinks that this is a supernatural figure functioning as an angelic messenger. For him there is a mingling of acting subjects (man, spirit, God). Fuhs, Ezechiel 49, says that the writers quite consciously left it indeterminate who carries Ezekiel away. Allen, Ezekiel 138, argues that there is no room for an angelic interpreter in Ezek 8-11, but that we find a pattern of references to chap. 1. Especially the (secondary) v.4 now helps to blur the contours within the divine sphere. 8:4 refers to God's glory and retrospectively creates the impression that the humanoid figure in 8:2 might be a different thing.

by a mop of his hair (8:3a). The next moment it is the spirit[15] lifting him between earth and heaven and taking him in divine visions to Jerusalem, namely to the northern entrance of the city (8:3b). With its mixture of phrases and concepts which are found elsewhere in the book[16], Ezek 8:1-3 introduce the visionary section 8:4-11:23. 11:24 (and 25) corresponds to 8:1-3, building a frame for the collection of visions. Strictly speaking, so far an "angel" is not to be found, as in the first part of the vision God himself is talking to Ezekiel and taking him on a guided tour[17] through the Jerusalem Temple.

Ezek 8:3bβ,5-17 describe a series of four scenarios of aberrant worshipping Ezekiel witnesses during his spiritual journey. All four scenes follow the same pattern: The divine power takes him to the setting which Ezekiel, the first-person narrator, describes. God's voice addresses him, sometimes giving orders ("lift up your eyes", 8:5; "go in and see", 8:9), always asking "Mortal, have you seen / do you see this" (8:6,12,15,17) and announcing at the end of the first three scenes "you will see still greater abominations than these" (8:6,13,15).

As the book's basic fiction has it, Ezekiel lives among the exiles in Babylonia. That is why he witnesses in a rapture the aberrant cultic practices in the Jerusalem Temple. Otherwise he might have walked about the town and the Temple area on his own and observed the sinful doings of Jerusalemite people. Ezek 8 visualizes the people's sins and functions corresponding to an indictment within a prophetic oracle. Compared to the Deuteronomistic school's stereotyped criticism of aberrant worship, Ezek 8 offers a detailed specific description of offences committed right in the one and only legitimate sanctuary. The four scenes taken together indicate an entirety of sin. God's final comment on each scene indicates their climactic arrangement. His last comment (8:18) threatens and announces judgement without mercy[18]. He does not say, however, how he is going to execute it. At least part of the collection of oracles following later on in Ezek 12-24 might provide an answer in a metaphorical way of speaking. Another answer is implied in God's glory leaving the Temple (11:23, prepared by the glory's presence mentioned in 8:4).

Ezek 9:1-10:7 offers the most impressive illustration of how judgement will be executed on Jerusalem. Ezekiel's visionary experience is

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15   Cf. Ezek 3:12,14; 11:1,5,24; 37:1a.

16   Vogt, Untersuchungen 39-41, takes Ezek 8:2-3a as an addition, Pohlmann, Prophet 138, considers 8:1-3bα as an addition.

17   בוא hif., here meaning either "he brought me", or "he made me come".

18   The combination of חוס and חמל is also found in Ezek 5:11; 7:4,9; 9:5,10. These actions are always prompted by abominations.

continued, but the objects he perceives belong to another level as he gains insight into the divine sphere including its celestial residents. Ezekiel turns from wanderer and witness to mere witness. It seems plausible that the vision of abominations committed in the Temple was expanded by the vision of judgement[19].

Yelling with a loud voice God calls out. He is either giving a statement on ("They have come near the [punishments] punishers of the city") or an order to ("Come near, you [punishments] punishers of the city")[20] a group *sc.* of persons, each one carrying his instrument of destruction (מַשְׁחֵת) in his hand. Ezekiel describes what is happening next (הנה, 9:2): God's calling prompts the appearance of six men. Ezekiel observes them approaching from the north. Each has an instrument for destroying (נפץ "dashing to pieces", 9:2aα) in his hand. There is also one man among them wearing linen garment and a writing kit at his side (9:2aβ) so that the total number of men makes up seven[21]. Again this number symbolizes an entity, this time a heavenly one. At the same time there may be a tradition of seven deities – for example seven Babylonian planetary deities – in the background[22]. The linen-clad man with the writing kit is distinguished as a priestly figure and as a scribe at the same time. Accordingly, God will send him on two different commissions. The six executioners are sent into the city to strike (נכה), i.e. to kill. Their activity will be performed without mercy (9:5a), reflecting God's attitude, namely neither to show compassion nor to feel pity (9:5b cf. 8:18). 9:6a explicates the relentlessness of judgement: They are to kill old and young, women and children without any exception. This command to execute people indifferently and not sparing anyone is perfectly in line with God's threat in 8:18.

Now, God's first order to the linen-clothed man is inconsistent with total judgement, as he tells him to use his writing instrument in order to mark with a protective sign the foreheads of those who criticize aberrant cultic practices in town[23]. This scribal function of the linen-

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19 Zimmerli, Ezechiel 205-206, offers a reconstruction of a basic text he finds in chapters 8 and 9; Becker, Ez 8-11 143, thinks that chapters 8 and 9 may not be separated. Later commentators tend to regard Ezek 9 as a later addition: Cf. Pohlmann, Prophet 142; Block, Book 302, says that the editor worked hard to integrate chapter 9. Behrens, Visionsschilderungen 225, would not expect a sequel after the threat in 8:18.

20 קרבו may be understood in both ways; cf. the discussion by Zimmerli, Ezechiel 195-196 and Vogt, Untersuchungen 46-47.

21 This seems preferable to considering the linen-clad man as one of the six. The remark that the glory starts to move to the threshold of the Temple (9:3a) prompted the repetition of the seventh man's description.

22 Cf. Gunkel, Schreiberengel 295.

23 ת was written as x or +. For a protective sign cf. Gen 4:15.

clothed man seems to be a later modification allowing for a (small) part of Jerusalem's population who have not committed abominations and thus will be spared[24]. This feature takes into account the problem that there may be some righteous people in Jerusalem; on these retribution would not be inflicted. This means that the writing kit at the man's side (9:3bβ), the word אחריו (9:5aβ), and the order to the executioners not to touch those bearing the mark (9:6aα²) are secondary material within this passage, as well as 9:11 reintroducing the linen-clothed man for receiving his second, that is his original commission.

So in the basic version God sends the six executioners to Jerusalem to inflict punishment on her population relentlessly (9:6aβ). They are to start killing people right in the heart of the city, namely in the Temple (9:6b)[25]. Quite consciously God has them defile the sanctuary with the dead bodies of those who have profaned the Temple by cultic aberration (9:7a). This idea reminds of King Josiah defiling the altar at Bethel with the bones of buried people (2Kgs 23:16), thus fulfilling an oracle of old (1Kgs 13:2). Here, defilement even concerns Yhwh's only legitimate sanctuary in Jerusalem – not a shrine considered illegitimate from a Deuteronomist's point of view.

When the executioners have gone to perform their commission, Ezekiel reacts to what he has seen and heard. He falls to the ground and pleads for the people who are the remnant of Israel (9:8)[26]. Ezekiel's intercession recalls Amos' prayers (Am 7:1-3,4-6); whereas Amos' pleading for mercy makes God abandon his intention to punish Israel, Yhwh does not yield to Ezekiel's plea, but confirms his plan to inflict punishment for Jerusalem's exceeding guilt (9:9) and his determination not to feel pity (9:10, resuming 8:18; 9:5). Jerusalem is doomed to the coming catastrophe irrevocably.

The basic text of the vision of judgement is continued in 10:2,6,7[27]. Now the man clothed in linen receives his primary order, namely to take burning coals from the wheelwork of the glory's throne and to

24 For the problem cf. Ezek 14:12-23; Gen 18:23-33; and Ezek 18 for the problem of individual retribution.

25 Either the 25 men mentioned in 8:16 offering the climactic cultic offence, or the 70 elders in 8:11 are to be slain first.

26 This prayer again proves that God's first order to the linen-clad must be a later addition as Ezekiel talks about all that remains of Israel. Besides it is quite uncommon within the Book of Ezekiel that the prophet himself addresses God (cf. 11:13 and 21:5 [MT]); so Ezekiel's prayer appears to be secondary material within the book. It is clearly intended to allude to Amos' intercession and thereby to make the reader see an increase in God's relentlessness – which is due to the increase in the people's crime.

27 For the secondary character of 10:1 and 10:3-5 cf. Hölscher, Hesekiel 78; Vogt, Untersuchungen 50-52; Hossfeld, Tempelvision 161-162.

scatter them over the city (10:2) in order to burn Jerusalem. 10:6b[28], 7 describe how the man is supplied with coals by a cherub – this recalls the seraph's action in Isa 6:6 – and leaves the Temple carrying them in his hands. It goes without saying that he will keep on performing God's commission and set Jerusalem on fire. The fact that he closely approaches the altar viz. the wheelwork of the glory's throne explains why he is characterized as a priestly figure through his linen garment[29]. His primary function here is that of a punishing agent. Together, he and the other six men bring about Jerusalem's doom. As there were people who survived the conquest of Jerusalem, an additional after-thought provides the linen-clad man with a protective role. Since priests and scribes were often identical persons it was easy to give him also a scribal attribute and function.

Although the text refers to all seven as "men", it is obvious for the reader that they belong to the celestial sphere. They are at God's command and he employs them to execute judgement on Jerusalem. YHWH sends them, therefore they may be called "angels" from a later point of view. God delegates power to this squad of angels to effect mass de-struction. In Ezekiel's vision they are a visualization of the way God accomplishes judgement, namely by supernatural powers. The readers know that actually it was the Babylonian army that served as God's instrument of destruction. Being aware of this historical level, Ezekiel's vision describes the corresponding supernatural proceedings that cause the catastrophe. He has a glimpse behind the scenes so to speak. In this sense Ezek 9:1-10:7* may be called apocalyptic.

As compared to the single destroyers in the historical narratives several aspects are striking considering Ezek 9:1-10:7. There is a group of seven agents of doom; they enter upon different tasks – the striking (נכה) reminding of the single destroyer's activity, the scattering of fire recalling the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Apart from this Ezekiel's vision of judgement abounds in allusions to other Biblical texts, a feature characteristic of scribal activity. It is distinctive of the Book of Ezekiel that its authors pick up phrases, metaphors, or con-cepts from preceding literature and make them more elaborate. Hence, it seems likely that Jer 22:7 plays an important part in the development of this vision of God's punishing agents[30]. Jer 22:7 says: "I have conse-crated against you destroyers, each with his instrument, and they will

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28   10:6a repeats God's command because of the insertion of 10:3-5.
29   For priestly garments made of linen cf. Exod 28:42; Lev 6:2; later it is a characteristic of angelic figures cf. Dan 10:5; 12:6-7.
30   Fuhs, Ezechiel 54, says that the idea of the destroyer was taken from Jer 22:7 and extended to seven beings because of Babylonian influence.

cut down your choicest cedars and cause them to fall into the fire." This poetic verse is part of an oracle of doom directed against the Judean royal dynasty. Jerusalem will be made a desert (22:6). YHWH has already assigned destroyers; they will point their destroying activity at the buildings made of cedar wood, that is, the Temple and the King's palace, which represent the heart of the city. The destroyers will ruin and burn them. It goes without saying that this will affect the inhabitants as well. In Jeremiah, the "destroyers" refer to the Babylonian army. In Ezek 9, though, they are transferred to the celestial sphere, bearing in mind the idea of a single destroyer and the Ancient Near Eastern traditions of seven deities. With this glimpse into the divine sphere Ezekiel's vision illustrates that doomsday is irrevocably imminent for Jerusalem. God has already activated his agents, and they will certainly execute his commission, as these angels are God's faithful servants[31].

3. The Satan Pleading for Doom (Job and Zech)

There are two further glimpses into the celestial sphere where agents of God appear who at least intend to condemn a person and to abandon him to doom. In both instances "the satan" takes the function of this agent of doom, namely in the two scenes in heaven included in the prologue of the Book of Job (Job 1:6-12; 2:1-7)[32], and in Zech 3:1-2.

Within the narrative about Job, the "sons of God" assemble twice before YHWH (1:6; 2:1)[33]; the only prominent figure among these is "the satan", the accuser or opponent (הַשָּׂטָן)[34]. Obviously, the satan is accustomed to leave the heavenly sphere and to travel through the world, observing people. YHWH is especially concerned about Job, his servant, because he considers him a paramount example of piety, righteousness and fear of God. The accuser challenges God's view of Job. He states that Job is not disinterested, that he will only be pious and righteous as

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31 Note: In the narrative of Susannah appended to the Book of Daniel, Daniel functions as judge and declares the two elders guilty. He leaves their punishment to God's angel (Dan 13:55,59).

32 The problem whether the two scenes in heaven originally formed an integral part of the narrative (cf. e.g. Spieckermann, Satanisierung 433 annotation 5), or were inserted later (cf. e.g. Berges, Ijobrahmen 232-234) may be neglected for our present purpose.

33 This assembly, the "divine counsel" is a concept to be found in Ancient Near Eastern mythology, cf. Parker, Sons.

34 Since in Hebrew it is connected with the definite article, the term does not yet function as a proper name as it did later on in reception history.

long as he may enjoy the gifts of God, namely his rich possessions and his prospering family. God enters into the contest and permits the accuser to deprive Job of everything he calls his own – except his life. At the end of this dialogue the narrator remarks that the accuser left the heavenly sphere (1:12b). Therefore it is clear for the reader that the satan is the one who causes Job's loss of prosperity. The satan however does not succeed in making Job renounce his faith in God. Thus he asks YHWH for a second chance – this time he plans an attack on Job's health. Again God agrees under the condition that the satan spare Job's life. This time the narrator explicitly says that the satan struck (נכה) Job with severe disease (2:7). If God had not forbidden to touch Job's life, Job would certainly have died on this occasion.

So in two steps the satan acts as a destroyer of blessings God had given to Job. YHWH's restrictive permission indicates that the satan would have the power to kill Job. Especially in the second episode the satan reminds of the destroyers we met above. As the accuser enters the human world in order to do harm he also resembles the group of seven angels in Ezekiel. As YHWH keeps the prerogative of life he is clearly the Satan's superior. But in contrast to the faithful servant angels we met before, he is YHWH's antagonist furnished with power. The satan not only acts as a destroyer, he also pleads that even a righteous man like Job is in fact doomed because his piety is not disinterested. The satan is no doubt a celestial being and an agent of God – in this sense he may be called an angel. But he appears much more independent than the punishing angels in the Pentateuch, the historical writings and in Ezek, as he is directly conversing with YHWH and even arguing a point of his own. Because of his comparatively great independence and even though he is not God's equal the satan is also considered a challenge to the monotheistic concept. That is why interpreters of the heavenly scenes have described the satan as the dark side or as an aspect of the complex personality of the one and only God[35]. But again a biblical writer has not God himself touch man and cause him harm; instead the narrator has an intermediary do this[36].

The narrator discloses the heavenly sphere only to the reader[37]. To Job, the protagonist of the story, it seems as if God himself has acted

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35 Cf. Clines, Job 22: "we can suggest that the 'sons of God' or 'angels' are manifestations of the divine personality, the means of execution of divine decisions, the source of divine acquisition of knowledge of human affairs. That they are *only* personifications of divine attributes, powers, or dispositions is beyond the competence of any human to tell; but they are that at least." Cf. also Spieckermann, Satanisierung.

36   In the course of reception history this prompted the idea that the satan is an evil power which he is not in the OT (cf. Pagels, Origin, 39-42).

37 Schmid, Hiobproblem 21.

upon him and deprived him of his prosperity (cf. 1:21aβ; 2:10aβ). Therefore, the two scenes in heaven offer to the reader still another interpretation as to why Job has to suffer so much without any apparent reason.

The satan[38] in Zech 3:1-2[39] resembles the one in Job 1-2 in that he obviously pleads to condemn Joshua the high priest and to expose him to doom. Actually he objects to Joshua's suitability for the office of the high priest. As we learn later on Joshua is wearing filthy clothing (3:3) which symbolizes his impure and sinful state which might justify his rejection. Here, the satan seems to be opposed by an angel of YHWH (instead of YHWH himself)[40] who acts as God's representative and effects forgiveness of Joshua's sin. Even if the angel dominates the satan, one has a feeling that the two opponents are basically on the same level as two angels arguing different causes. The satan is only mentioned briefly in this context. As Zech 3 is part of the series of Zechariah's visions, it recalls Ezekiel witnessing a scene in heaven while he is in a state of rapture.

The narrators or authors of the texts we have examined give their readers an opportunity to witness the activities of divine agents who have the power to destroy. They do this at YHWH's command, or with his permission, and yet, the reader gets the impression that God himself does not execute destruction. He leaves this to his agents. These divine punishing "angels" – as they were or came to be called – were introduced in order to preserve the supreme Deity's transcendent and holy state and / or to include the aspect of considering doom in God's personality. They are mythical elements rising within firmly established monotheism. At the same time they may be a challenge to the monotheistic creed as well. Anyway, they help to pave the way for a concept of punishing agents in hell who are at Satan's command.

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38   Again, not a proper name, cf. the definite article in Hebrew.
39   The discussion whether Zech 3 is an original, integral part of the series of visions (cf. Beuken, Sacharja 282-283) or an insertion (cf. Jeremias, Nachtgesichte 201-203; more recently Behrens, Visionsschilderungen 301-305) need not be taken into consideration for our present purpose.
40   Though MT reads יהוה in the beginning of 3:2, this is difficult because of the following speech which refers to YHWH in the third person. If MT was not corrupt, it would offer still another example of blurring the difference between God and his agent.

Abstract

In narrative writings of the OT (Exod 12, 2Kgs19, Gen 19, 2Sam 24) a single punishing agent (only in Gen 19 there are two of them operating more in detail) occurs who kills a great number of people. At least in Exod 12 and Gen 19 the texts also say that God himself effects destruction. This ambiguity seems to mirror the genesis of these stories.

Within Ezekiel's second vision (Ezek 8-11) the prophet takes a glimpse behind the celestial scenes: He witnesses how God reacts to the cultic aberrations in the Jerusalem Temple. God calls a group of seven men, celestial personifications of the Babylonian destroyers mentioned in Jer 22:7. God orders six of them to kill the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the seventh is originally commissioned to set the city on fire. A later afterthought also made him mark the innocent within the city with a protective sign.

"The satan" in Job 1-2 and in Zech 3:1-2 pleads that Job viz. Joshua are in fact doomed to judgement because they are potential viz. actual sinners.

Throughout these texts the readers get the impression that God does not execute destruction / doom himself.

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Satan, God, and the Angel(s) in 1Chronicles 21

PANCRATIUS C. BEENTJES, UTRECHT

Reading the Book of Chronicles, one is almost spontaneously inclined to take into account the parallel narratives as handed down in 2Samuel or 1-2Kings. In actual practice, it appears rather difficult therefore to approach the narrative of 1Chronicles 21 with an open mind. Time and again there is a threat that the reader is distracted from the plot of the Chronicler's narrative by snatches or reminiscences of 2Samuel 24.

In order not to miss the specific point(s) of 1Chronicles 21, first and foremost we will exclusively concentrate on the Chronicler's text, pretending not to know the existence of its parent text (I). Just thereafter, attention will be paid to the most important differences with 2Samuel 24 (II). Finally, we will discuss the presence of angels in the Book of Chronicles (III).

Part I: 1Chronicles 21

1. The Narrative Structure of 1Chronicles 21[1]

The narrative in 1Chronicles 21 has been shaped in a well-built way. With respect of the main agents it is marked by three episodes: (1) David's initiative towards a census in Israel (21:1-6); (2) God's reaction (21:7-14); (3) The scene at the threshing-floor of Ornan (21:15-22:1).

1.1 David's initiative to number Israel (1Chr 21:1-6)

The opening words of the narrative immediately pose a problem which, according to the reader's choice, could involve far-reaching theological consequences. The matter touches the question in what way the Hebrew noun שָׂטָן in 1Chr 21:1 should be rendered. Until recently, it

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1 Text critical questions and notes are amply discussed in McKenzie, Chronicler's Use 55-58; 67-71; Knoppers, Chronicles 10-29, 743-750; Klein, Chronicles 414-417.

went without saying to consider it a proper name ('Satan'), a rendering that is found in almost every Bible edition and commentary. Lately, however, as a result of an increasing number of publications relating to this subject, the earlier massive view displays some cracks.

In order to make a well-founded decision in this matter, a short overview of the data is in order.[2] In the Hebrew Bible the noun שטן occurs 27 times, in eight cases of which it means 'a (military) adversary' (Num 22:22, 32; 1Sam 29:4; 2Sam 19:23; 1Kgs 5:18 [5:4]; 11:14, 23, 25). In Ps. 109:6 the noun שטן denotes the position of what nowadays is called 'prosecutor' or 'accuser'. It is of utmost importance to emphasize that in all abovementioned texts שטן occurs as an *indefinite* noun. In seventeen biblical passages which with no exception all are found in Job 1:6-2:7 and Zech 3:1-2, שטן is the designation of a heavenly being that in God's court of justice in heaven functions as the prosecutor. In all these seventeen occurrences the noun שטן is provided with the *definite* article.

Assuming that שטן in 1Chr 21:1 should denote such a heavenly being, one would expect a definite noun here, which is not! Therefore, it has much to recommend it that שטן should be interpreted here neither as a position 'prosecutor' / 'accuser' nor as a proper name ('Satan'). As an additional argument, one can point to the fact that in non-biblical Hebrew literature which is of considerable later date than the Book of Chronicles, שטן is never used as a proper name, but always in the sense of 'adversary' (e.g. 1QH 4:6; 45:3; 1QSb 1:8). As a proper name it is only found in documents, such as *Jubilees* (23:29) and *Ascensio Moysis* (10:1), that were written during the persecutions by Antioch IV (ca. 165 BCE). In sum, one should at least reckon with the possibility that 1Chr 21:1 refers to an unknown (military) adversary, who takes a stand against David.[3]

The mere fact that David ordered to number Israel is in itself no unusual phenomenon in a document that is full of lists and military registers (1Chronicles 1-9; 23-26). And moreover, it should be pointed out that later on in the Book of Chronicles several kings will carry out a census: Solomon (2Chr 2:17-18); Joshaphat (2Chr 17:13-19); Amaziah (2Chr 25:5); Uzziah (2Chr 26:11-13).

As a matter of course, this brings us to the crucial question: what exactly was displeasing to God (21:7)? John Wright takes the view that it must have been *Joab's behaviour*.[4] Joab disobeyed David's command,

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2   See e.g. Day, Adversary in Heaven; Breytenbach / Day, Satan; Hamilton, Satan; Evans, Intermediaries; Kreuzer, Antagonist.

3   In his Verdeutschung der Schrift, Martin Buber for example has rendered שטן 'ein Hinderer' (someone who hinders, obstructs).

4   Wright, Innocence 95-99; see the reaction of Bailey, David's Innocence.

since 'he did not include Levi and Benjamin in the numbering, for the king's command was abhorrent to Joab' (21:6).[5] However, if Wright's view would be correct, David's reaction in verse 8 is hardly to understand, since in that case the only possible way out would be that David takes the responsibility for Joab's decision not to include Levi and Benjamin in the numbering. David's action in v.8, however, rather appears to refer to the numbering as such, which was the king's decision. Now he realizes that it was a sin and a foolish act.

In my view, the key to the solution what is really going on in 1Chronicles 21 is what the narrator makes Joab say in verse 3. His response to David's command consists of a wish and three questions which together should be considered a dam to prevent David's plan.

Joab's wish – 'May YHWH increase the number of his people a hundredfold!' (v.3) – could be interpreted as an allusion to God's promise to Abraham (Gen 15:5; 22:17; cf. Deut 1:10-11). Another possibility would be that Joab wants to make it clear to David that it is *God's* people and, as a consequence, the census needs God's approval. Or would the real reason of Joab's answer be that the people is already countless (cf. 1Chr 27:23)? Finally, one could take the view that David forgot to implement the instruction of Exod 30:12-16 – 'When you take a census of the Israelites to register them, at registration all of them shall give a ransom for their lives to YHWH, so that no plague may come upon them for being registered …'.[6]

The rhetorical question which is put forward by Joab – 'Are they not, my lord the king, all of them my lord's servants?' – accentuates that a census is needless, since David can of course depend on every one in his kingdom. Subsequent to his rhetorical question, Joab formulates two sharp and concrete questions – 'Why then should my lord require this? Why should he bring guilt on Israel?'. The notion 'guilt' (אשׁמה) is a late, post-exilic Hebrew word (Lev 4:3; 5:24, 26; 22:16; Esra 9:6, 7, 13, 15; 10:10, 19) which in the Book of Chronicles without exception occurs only in the so-called '*Sondergut*' passages (1Chr 21:3; 2Chr 24:18; 28:10, 13³; 33:23).[7]

The notion אשׁמה refers to guilt which can only be annulled by atonement. Joab therefore is facing David with the consequences of his plan: the decision of one person, viz. King David, will bound to have repercussions on the people of Israel as a whole, as in Lev 4:3. David, however, wants to press home. So Joab departed and went throughout

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5   Unless otherwise stated, biblical quotations are from New Revised Standard Version, Oxford 1995. Instead of 'the LORD', however, we have rendered 'YHWH'.

6   See Flavius Josephus, *Antiquitates Judaicae*, VII, 318.

7   See Kellerman, אשׁמה 429-437.

all Israel (1Chr 21:4). The route description of Joab's inspection contains the collocation 'from Beer-Sheba to Dan' (1Chr 21:2) which is an inversion of the current biblical formula 'from Dan to Beer-Sheba' (Judg 21:1; 1Sam 3:20; 2Sam 3:10; 17:11; 24:2, 15; 1Kgs 5:5). This latter collocation does go back not earlier as the exilic period and is to be considered an idealized description of Israel's territory.[8] The fact that the Chronicler has reversed the classical order will have to do with the geographical and political situation of his days. In that time only Beer-Sheba was part of the Persian province *Jᵉhud*; Dan in fact was observed as a sort of pre-historic entity. That is the reason why in 2Chr 19:4 it is said: 'from Beer-Sheba to the hill country of Ephraim', since that was the factual border of Judah in the Chronicler's time.

On his return in Jerusalem, Joab gave the total count of the people to David. On the narrative level it is reported that Joab had not included Levi and Benjamin in the numbering, for the king's command was abhorrent to him (1Chr 21:6). Joab's decision not to number the tribe of Levi can be elucidated from the Book of Numbers:

> 'The Levites, however, were not numbered by their ancestral tribe along with them. YHWH had said to Moses: Only the tribe of Levi you shall not enrol, and you shall not take a census of them with the other Israelites' (Num 1:47-49).
> 'Just as YHWH had commanded Moses, the Levites were not enrolled among the other Israelites' (Num 2:33).

However, it is hard to understand why the Chronicler makes Joab not to number the tribe of Benjamin. The most obvious explanation would be that this non-numbering should be related to the holy status of Gibeon which in this narrative is still the cultic centre of Israel:

> 'The tabernacle of YHWH which Moses had made in the wilderness, and the altar of burnt-offering were there at that time' (1Chr 21:29).

Another plausible inference which in no way conflicts with the former one, would be that Joab's non-numbering of the tribe Benjamin prevents Jerusalem, which is a city on the boundary of Benjamin and Judah, from being 'contaminated'. For at the very end of this narrative (1Chr 22:1) it is precisely Jerusalem that will be pushed forward as the future site of the cult. In this respect it is absolutely no coincidence that the Chronicler in his genealogy of Benjamin earlier in his book (Chronicles 8-9) has explicitly paid attention to both Gibeon (8:29; 9:35) and Jerusalem (9:3-34).

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8   Schoors, Berseba 119-129.

1.2 God's reaction (1Chr 21:7-14)

This middle section of the narrative is of a highly dramatic calibre. It starts with a negative tone: 'God was displeased about this thing' (v.7). In theory, 'this thing' could refer to Joab's decision not to number Levi and Benjamin (v.6), as is favoured by some scholars.[9] The sequel of the narrative, however, proves beyond any doubt that the collocation 'this thing' in v.7 must refer to David's command to number Israel, which in fact is confirmed by David's confession: 'I have sinned greatly in that I have done *this thing*' (v.8).

Whereas the reader of the Book of Chronicles meanwhile is accustomed that David attacks (נכה) peoples and kings nearby (1Chr 18:1-12; 20:1-7), now it is *God* who strikes (נכה) Israel (1Chr 21:7; cf. 13:10). Quite a few commentators hold the view that the phrase 'he [God] struck Israel' anticipates the pestilence as recorded in 21:14 and should therefore be characterized as a 'proleptic summary'.[10] Apart from the fact that the narrative in that case would display a rather complicated flash back layer, it should furthermore be emphasized that if it would be considered a proleptic summary indeed, verse 7 is unlinked from the previous episode (21:1-6). At the same time the question can be raised what might still be the function of verse 17 as related to verse 8.

The action of Gad (21:9-13) speaks against such a proleptic function, too. According to the common pattern of prophetic speech, in that case Gad should first have put forward an accusation ('Since you did this and that …'), followed by an announcement of judgment / punishment ('Therefore …'). In 1Chr 21:7-13, however, there is no accusation, since this aspect has already been set in motion by David in his confession of guilt (21:8). And it is not by accident that the king's exclamation has got a special lay-out in the Masoretic text. The verse is encompassed by a *p*ᵉ*tucha*, by means of which these dramatic words of David are presented as a separate paragraph and get a special status within the narrative.

The seer who is sent to David by YHWH is called Gad, a name that ironically means 'luck'. He is also met in 1Chr 29:29 and 2Chr 29:25, always accompanied by the title חזה ('seer') which is one of the Chronicler's favourite nouns.[11] God's order at Gad's address is characterized

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9　E.g. Wright, Innocence 98-99.

10　E.g. De Vries, Chronicles 171; Williamson, Chronicles 145; McKenzie, Chronicles 173; Dirksen, Chronicles 259; Klein, Chronicles 422.

11　From the seventeen times the noun occurs in the Hebrew Bible, it is found ten times (= 60%) in the Book of Chronicles. This is due to the fact that in enumerations of prophetic activities the Chronicler avoids to simultaneously apply the same title to two

by a deliberate retarding. The seer presents three options to the king, one of which he has to choose (v.9). However, it is just in a later stage (v.12) that David is told what those three options really are. They are submitted to him in a rather schematic form; this concerns both the temporal chain (three years – three months – three days) and the classical triplet (famine – devastation – pestilence). Whereas the first option is expressed very shortly (four words), the second one has nine words, the third even thirteen. From the perspective of the narrative technique this is no surprise, since the third option will – be it in an indirect way – actually be chosen by David.

The second and third options have been linked together with the help of the noun 'sword': 'the sword of your enemies / the sword of YHWH'. Here we meet the only occurrence in the entire Hebrew Bible in which pestilence is called 'the sword of YHWH'. It is also striking that the pestilence is personified as 'the angel of YHWH destroying throughout all the territory of Israel' (v.12). The verbal form 'destroying' (*mašḥît*) is identical to Exod 12:13. 23, where it has a bearing on the final plague of Egypt.[12]

David's answer on God's choice between 'the sword of the enemies' and 'the sword of YHWH' is articulated in a particular shape:

'Let me fall into the hands of YHWH,
for his mercy is very great;
but let me not fall into human hands'.[13]

In this *chiastiallyc* structured answer (to fall – hand / hands – to fall) David expressly asked to exclude the second option, whereas he does not make a choice between the first and the third option. Thus YHWH sent a pestilence on Israel to the effect that seventy thousand persons – no doubt a symbolic number – were killed (v.14).

In fact, the narrative thus far is structured as a kind of *geographical inclusion*. It started with David's command to number *Israel* (v.1) and the final effect of it is that YHWH sent a pestilence on *Israel* (v.14).

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or three persons. Therefore, in 1Chr 29:29 Samuel is called ראה ('seer'), Nathan נביא ('prophet'), and Gad חזה ('seer'). In 2Chr 9:29, Iddo is called חזה, since he occurs in an enumeration with Nathan (נביא), whereas the same Iddo in 2Chr 13:22 is entitled נביא, as he is the only one mentioned there. See Schniedewind, Word 31-54.

12 In the Book of Chronicles the verb שחת ('to destroy') occurs sixteen times, by far the most (thirteen times) in the Chronicler's own material (*Sondergut*).

13 An echo of this passage is found in Sir. 2:18.

1.3 The scene at the threshing-floor of Ornan
(1Chr 21:15-22:1).

In v.15, the narrative zooms in on Jerusalem, specifically on the threshing-floor of Ornan, which is the scene where the remainder of the story will take place. As soon as YHWH saw the angel starting his mission of destruction, he repented (Gen 6:6; Exod 32:14). Whereas the Chronicler immediately informs his readers that YHWH puts a stop to the angel of death (v.15), is David still in a state of uncertainty. He sees 'the angel of YHWH standing between earth and heaven, and in his hand a drawn sword stretched out over Jerusalem (v.16)[14]. No doubt this is a deliberate reference to Josh 5:13-14, which also presents a *hieros logos,* relating to the erection of a cultic site.[15] Not until v.27 the threatening angel will put his sword into its sheath and he is feared by David till the end of the narrative (v.30). It therefore is the angel of YHWH who as an important agent – together with the geographical notion of 'the threshing-floor of Ornan' – constitutes an *inclusio* in the final part of the narrative.[16]

That David is accompanied by the elders is an indication that the situation is tense. For in the Book of Chronicles the elders do not frequently enter on the scene. It can hardly be a coincidence, however, that they are never absent at important political (1Chr 11:3; 2Chr 10:6, 8, 13) and cultic moments (1Chr 15:25; 21:16; 2Chr 5:2, 4; 34:29). The information that David and the elders are clothed in sackcloth not only highlights the dramatic effect of the narrative, but is also emphasizing the serious nature of the situation.

For the second time within the narrative David appeals to God (v.17). Just as the first time (v.8), it is a confession of guilt; but now it turns out to be a supplication. The rhetorical question which opens his plea, lays the emphasis exactly where it has to be: 'Was it not *I* [not Joab!] who gave the command to number the people?'. And in the next statement too he blames himself: 'It is *I* who have sinned and done very wickedly', using the same verb חטא ('to sin') as in v.8.[17] Then attention shifts to those who, even though innocent, have tremendously been struck. This has been done with the help of a metaphor: 'these sheep,

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14   The wording 'with his drawn sword in his hand' (v.16) undoubtedly reminds of the collocation 'the men who drew the sword', which occurs twice in v.5.

15   The phrase 'with his drawn sword in his hand' is also found in Num 22:23, 31.

16   The noun 'angel' is found in 21:15 [3 x], 16, 18, 20, 27, and 30; the noun 'threshing-floor' occurs in 21:15, 18, 21, 22, and 28.

17   The notion of 'David as repentant sinner' has amply been described by Knoppers, *Images.*

what have they done?'. At that very moment, the narrator for the first
time puts the Holy Name ('YHWH') into David's mouth, which is no
coincidence of course, since it occurs at a very strategic moment of the
story and is also accompanied by the personal address 'my God'.

As far as Hebrew syntax is concerned, it strikes the eye that the
Chronicler applies a grammatical construct *hārē'a hᵃrē'ōtī* (infinitive
absolute + finite verbal form) which he usually tries to avoid in his
work, even if it is found in his *Vorlage*. The question presents itself
whether the infinitive absolute *hārē'a* should not be considered an error
in writing of *hārō'è* ('the shepherd'). For in that case, the Chronicler's
text not only would present a much more balanced double parallelism,
but also offer a perfect metaphor in the second half:

> I commanded to number the people // I have sinned,
> I, *the shepherd*, have done wickedly // but *these sheep*, what have
> they done?[18]

And indeed, the variant reading *hārō'è* ('the shepherd') has been
documented in the first Samuel Scroll from Qumran (4QSamᵃ), and has
also been handed down by the Greek translation of 2Sam 24:17, which
is rather dissimilar from the Masoretic text.

David's supplication – 'Let your hand, I pray, YHWH my God, be
against me and against my father's house, but do not let your people be
plagued!' (v.17b) – harks back to v.13, where the motif of 'God's hand'
dominated David's choice: 'Let me fall into the hands of YHWH, for his
mercy is very great'. One should also notice the rhetorical device '*your*
people', which often in the Hebrew Bible is specifically used to put God
on the spot.

The reaction to David's confession of guilt and his supplication is
quite remarkable. For a new pattern of communication shows up, since
it is *the angel of YHWH* whom is given the task of instructing Gad, who
in his part has to deliver the message to David that he should erect an
altar to YHWH on the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite (v.18). With
the phrase 'David went up following Gad's instructions, which he had
spoken in YHWH's name' (v.19), the author creates the opportunity
meanwhile to inform his readers what is enacting on the threshing-
floor: 'Ornan turned and saw the angel' (v.20a).

The lapidary phrase 'Ornan continued to thresh wheat' (v.20b) is
not as harmless as it looks, because it calls to mind the story of Gideon
in Judg 6:11, which – just as Josh 5:13-14 – is part of a *hieros logos* too.
And the collocation 'at its full price' (בכסף מלא) in 1Chr 21:22, 24 -

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18   As to the quite complicated textual history of the Chronicler's *Vorlage* in Samuel, see
     Klein, Chronicles 28-30; Knoppers, Chronicles 1-9, 55-71; Pisano, Additions 61-66;
     Rofé, 4QSamᵃ; Ulrich, Qumran Text 86-93; 156-159.

which is found only one more time in the Hebrew Bible (Gen 23:9) – refers to a holy site, too. It is the story that Abraham buys the cave of Machpela to bury his wife Sarah.

In fact, all kind of things appear to happen simultaneously, since all agents have been situated in the neighbourhood of the threshing-floor. The angel of YHWH is there all the time, since his appearance is already mentioned in v.15. Ornan is at work there; David who according to v.16 must have been nearby is on his way.

Finally, David built an altar to YHWH on the threshing-floor and has therefore carried out God's order (v.18). Then, for the very first time in 1Chronicles 21, YHWH himself responds in a direct way: 'He answered him [David] with fire from heaven on the altar' (v.26).[19] Only now YHWH commands the angel to put his sword back into his sheath (v.27). But even then David continues to be afraid of the angel's sword (v.30).

Part II: 2Samuel 24

2.1 The context

There is a huge contrast with respect of the *context* of 1Chronicles 21 and 2Samuel 24. The opening of 2Samuel 24 – '*Again* the anger of YHWH …' – has a bearing on an earlier narrative, in which God's anger was at issue too (2Samuel 21). As a result of this very referral, the literal and theological function of 2Samuel 24 is completely different from the one in 1Chronicles 21.

Whereas 2Samuel 24 in fact is a kind of an *appendix*, the narrative of 1Chronicles 21 on the contrary is of outmost importance, since it is the introduction to a substantial section of the Book of Chronicles relating to various aspects of the future Temple. The narrative of 1Chronicles 21, therefore, has an important *programmatic function*. For this narrative explicitly links the threshing-floor of Ornan to the site of the future Temple (21:28-22:1), a motif that is explicitly resumed in 2Chr 3:1. In 2Samuel 24, however, such a connection is nowhere to be found; its focus is rather constituted by the relationship between the purchase of the threshing floor, the erection of an altar, and the end of the plague (2Sam 24:21, 25). There is no reference, not even an allusion, to the future Temple.

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19   A parallel to 2Chr 7:1 urges itself upon the readers. See also Lev 9:24 and 1Kgs 18:38. It is no accident that in 2Chr 3:1 the site of the Temple is not only identified as Mount Moriah, but also as the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

2.2 Textual differences

It is not only the *context* of 1Chronicles 21 which considerably differs from the parallel narrative in 2Samuel 24, also the *text* of 1Chronicles 21 in many details varies from the parallel narrative.[20] Ever since three collections of fragments of the Book of Samuel were discovered at Qumran, there is a scholarly discussion whether the Chronicler's Hebrew *Vorlage* of Samuel was based on the Masoretic text type we know or on a Hebrew text type of a different kind.[21] The lacunal fragment of 2Sam 24:16-20 in 4QSamᵃ, for instance, has some similarities with the Hebrew text of 1Chronicles 21, which are not handed down in the Masoretic text of 2Sam 24:16-20. As an example we refer to 'the angel with his drawn sword in his hand' in 1Chr 21:16. The matter, however, is even more complicated, since the Greek translation of Samuel in many instances agrees with the Hebrew text of Chronicles against the Masoretic text of Samuel.[22]

On the basis of this complex set of data, we can at least reach the cautious conclusion that the Chronicler utilized a *Vorlage* of Samuel that was not identical to the extant Masoretic text. At the other hand, I think it unprovable that the Chronicler's Hebrew text of 1Chronicles 21 as we have it now would be a mere copy of the Samuel text type he had in front of him. There are too may instances in his narrative where we can detect his signature. Some of these we will briefly discuss now.

1. The phrase 'Why should he [David] bring guilt on Israel?' (1Chr 21:4b) can with certainty be ascribed to the Chronicler. First, since the notion 'guilt' (אשמה) is a late, post-exilic Hebrew noun that in the Book of Samuel does not occur at all. And second, because in the Book of Chronicles it is only found in the so-called '*Sondergut*' passages.[23]

2. In my view, the Chronicler's signature can also be seen in 1Chr 21:7 – 'He [God] struck Israel'. It can hardly be coincidence that the verb נכה is used here in respect of God, whereas in the same episode of the Samuel narrative it has a bearing on David: 'David was stricken to the heart' (2Sam 24:10).

3. Since the focus of the Chronicler's narrative is to safeguard the future Temple site, two times the noun מקום is expressly used (1Chr

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20   Most useful overviews of textual differences are offered by Braun, Chronicles 213-215; Klein, Chronicles 414-417; Knoppers, Chronicles 10-29, 743-750. The synopsis of Bendavid, Parallels 63-65, is of great help too.

21   The Samuel material from Qumran has been published by Cross, Qumran.

22   Lemke, Problem; Ulrich, Qumran; McKenzie, Chronicler's Use, 41-81; McCarter, I Samuel; McCarter, II Samuel; Brunet, Chroniste.

23   1Chr 21:3; 2Chr 24:18; 28:10, 13 [3x]; 33:23.

21:22, 25), which does not occur in the source text (2Samuel 24). The same noun will show up again in 2Chr 3:1, where the Chronicler not only refers to the threshing-floor, but also to Mount Moriah as the site of the Solomonic Temple.

4. One can understand why the Chronicler makes David pay such a huge amount of money to Ornan: 'six hundred shekels of gold' (1Chr 21:25), whereas in 2Sam 24:24 the site is sold for 'fifty shekels of silver'.[24] The future Temple site is invaluable and the price for it should by any means exceed the amount of money that has been paid for other cultic sites, such as the 'four hundred shekels of silver' which Abraham paid for the cave of Machpela (Gen 23:15).[25]

5. David's offerings and call to YHWH are answered with 'fire from heaven on the altar' that David had just erected (1Chr 21:26). Here we undoubtedly come across the Chronicler's signature, since the same concept is also found in 2Chr 7:1, at the very moment Solomon has ended his prayer at the occasion of the Temple's dedication.

6. It is beyond any doubt that the emphasis on Gibeon as the cultic place during David's (and Solomon's) reign is a special topic of the Book of Chronicles, which by the way is constantly found in the Chronicler's *Sondergut* (1Chr 16:39-42; 21:29-30; 2Chr 1:3-6).

Part III: Angels in the Book of Chronicles

3.1 The Chronicler's attention to angels

In the Book of Chronicles, angels appear on the scene only twice, both times in the Chronicler's source material (1Chronicles 21; 2Chronicles 32).[26] Since due to text critical questions 1Chronicles 21 in fact is the most complicated text, first attention will be paid to 2Chr 32:21.

Whereas the Book of Kings, as well as the Book of Isaiah, offer an ample report of the siege of Jerusalem by the Assyrian army, the illness of King Hezekiah, and the arrival of the Babylonian embassy (2Kgs

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24   The medieval Jewish commentator Rashi interpreted the difference between 'fifty shekels' (2Sam 24:24) and 'six hundred shekels' (1Chr 21:25), saying that David paid fifty shekels for each of the twelve tribes of Israel.

25   As we have noticed, there is a deliberate reference to this narrative by the unique expression 'as its full price' (1Chr 21:24; Gen 23:9).

26   'Und es ist keine Frage, daß der Chronist außer diesen Engeln noch mache andere gekannt hat'; Rothstein / Hänel, Kommentar xiv. A purely psychological remark without consequences!

18:9-20:19 / Isa 36:1-39:8), has the Chronicler a totally different narrative pattern. Out of a total of four chapters that he has devoted to Hezekiah, no less than three chapters deal with religious and cultic reforms this king has carried out (2Chronicles 29-31). His confrontation with the Assyrian army, therefore, has been given much less lines (2Chr 32:1-23) than was the case in his source.

Focussing now on the role the angel plays in both narratives dealing with the siege of Jerusalem, one can observe a change which from a theological point of view is quite interesting:

2Kgs 19:35 / Isa 37:35	*2Chr 32:21*
That very night the angel of YHWH set out	And YHWH sent an angel
and struck down	who cut off[27]
one hundred and eighty-five thousand	all the mighty warriors and commanders and officers
in the camp of the Assyrians.	in the camp of the king of Assyria.

The Chronicler had adapted his source text in such a way that the real agent of the Assyrian defeat was not the angel, but YHWH himself. In other words, the Chronicler has adjusted his *Vorlage* for theological reasons: the angel indeed acts as God's messenger.

This aspect also comes to light when the narrative of 2Samuel 24 is compared with the one in Chronicles 21. There are two specific moments where one can ascertain that texts have been altered in respect of angel's activities:

2Sam 24:16	*1Chr 21:15*
But when the angel stretched out his hands	And God sent an angel
towards Jerusalem to destroy it …	to Jerusalem to destroy it …

In 2Sam 24:16 the angel is put on the scene all of a sudden and acts autonomously, whereas in 1Chr 21:15 he arrives on the scene as a messenger of God acting according to God's command.

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27   Instead of the verb נכה, which is one of his favourite verbs, the Chronicler has chosen the verb כחד, which must be an intentional reference to Ex. 23:23.

Some lines later, the same pattern can be detected. Here the Chronicler has even sacrificed the vehicle of direct speech to make his theological view perfectly clear:

2Sam 24:18	*1Chr 21:18*
That day	Then the angel of YHWH commanded
Gad came to David and said to him,	Gad to tell David
'Go up	that he should go up
and erect an altar to YHWH …'	and erect an altar to YHWH …

3.2 How many angels in 1Chronicles 21?

The fact that in 1Chr 21 the noun 'angel' occurs nine times, whereas it is found only four times in his source text, poses the question how many angels are actually acting in the Chronicler's narrative.[28] Therefore, we need a quick outline of how they are called in the narrative. As a matter of fact, this is done in quite different ways: 'the destroying angel' (v.12, 15²), 'the angel of YHWH' (v.15), 'the angel of YHWH with a drawn sword in his hand' (v.16), 'the angel of YHWH' (v.18), 'the angel' (v.20), 'the angel putting his sword back in its sheath' (v.27), 'the sword of the angel of YHWH' (v.30).

At a first glance, there seem to be two of them: 'the destroying angel', and 'the angel of YHWH'. In my view, the key to this riddle should be found in verse 12, where the Chronicler (or his *Vorlage*) has substantially expanded the source text.

2Sam 24:13	*1Chr 21:12*
Or shall there be three days'	Or three days of the sword of YHWH,
pestilence in your land?	pestilence on the land, the angel of YHWH destroying throughout all the territory of Israel.

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28   1Chr 21:12, 15 [3x], 16, 18, 20, 27, 30; 2Sam 24:16 [3x], 17.

In 2Sam 24:13, the third choice offered to David consists of one single item ('pestilence'). In 1Chr 21:12, however, it has been expanded into a set of *three coordinate* items, of which 'pestilence' is the middle one. This literary feature is solid proof that the 'destroying angel' and the 'sword of YHWH', which further on in the narrative is personified as 'the angel with the drawn sword' are to be conceived as one and the same agent. The fact that starting from verse 15 onwards the Chronicler's version gets a high degree of simultaneousness may serve as an additional argument to the view that there is only one angel doing the job.

Abstract

The Chronicler's version of David's census (1Chronicles 21) both from a text critical and from a theological point of view is quite different from its parent text (2Samuel 24). It appears that the Chronicler's text at several instances has adopted allusions to biblical material that refer to cultic sites. So doing, the Chronicler want to emphasize that the narrative is about the future Temple site.

The author of this contribution reaches the conclusion that several features in the narrative make a reasonable case that it was the Chronicler who reworked the Samuel narrative instead of just handing down an existing *Vorlage*.

Although angels are mentioned rather often in the Chronicler's narrative, at a closer look it appears to be one and the same agent all the time.

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Cherubim and Seraphim
in the Bible and in the Light of Ancient
Near Eastern Sources

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1. Introductory Remarks

Biblical Cherubim and Seraphim are superhuman beings.[1] In Apocrypha, Pseudepigraphia and later Jewish literature they belong to the angels closely connected to the symbolism of the (heavenly) abode of YHWH and to the temple of Jerusalem (cf. 1En 71:7: "And round about were the Seraphim, and the Cherubim and the Ophannim; these are they who do not sleep, but keep watch over the throne of his glory"[2]). They represent various aspects of YHWH's kingdom in heaven and on earth. Despite the fact that there are more allusions to these mythological beings in the Hebrew Bible the most important impact on their image in Jewish writings derived from the descriptions in the visionary reports in Isa 6 and Ezek 1-3; 8-11. These chapters, dealing, among other things, with the call of the prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel, were the primary sources for the rendering of angelic beings in texts such as the Sabbath Songs from Qumran (4Q405 20-21-22:8[3]), Sir 49:8; ApocMos 33; ApocAbr 18:12; 1En 61:10; 71:7 (all focussing on the [Cherubim] throne [chariot] of YHWH, the central issue of the imaginative reflections in later Jewish Merkabah mysticism[4]).

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1   See Mettinger, Cherubim; Mettinger, Seraphim; Görg, Kerub; Jaroš, Seraf(im); Rüterswörden, *śārap̄*; Freedman / O'Connor, *kᵉrûḇ*; cf. further the important contributions by Keel, Jahwe-Visionen, and Keel, Herrlichkeitserscheinung.

2   Citation taken from Sparks, Old Testament 255 (for the "ophannim" see below note 96).

3   See about the the angelic beings in the Sabbath Songs Löhr, Thronversammlung; Schwemer, Gott.

4   See, for example, the survey of the chariot mysticism in the Merkabah-literature by Sholem, Trends; Schäfer, Gott; cf. for rabbinical sources Ego, Himmel, for later Jewish Kabbalah Maier, Kabbalah.

The intention of this article is to give an overview of recent research on the religio-historical background of Cherubim and Seraphim (with special focus on iconographical sources from the Ancient Near East and Palestine [2.]). I will also give some exegetical remarks on the meaning of the Seraphim and Cherubim in the visionary contexts in Isaiah and Ezekiel (3.). One has to bear in mind that the information we derive from Isa 6 and the visions in Ezekiel is not simply identical with what we may presuppose as the ordinary knowledge an ancient Israelite reader might have had of these beings. Therefore it is necessary to distinguish between the use the authors of the visionary reports made of the Seraphim and Cherubim, in order to emphasize their message, and the common connotations related to them. The latter we can only try to reconstruct with reference to other biblical texts as well as to Ancient Near Eastern sources.

2. Seraphim and Cherubim in the Light of Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Sources

In the biblical texts we find a considerable number that is 91 occurrences of the term "cherub / Cherubim" (mostly related to YHWH as king, to the holy of holies of the temple and to the tabernacle of the Priestly Writer in the Pentateuch[5]). On the other hand, there are only seven occurrences of "Seraph / Seraphim" in five texts (see below 2.3). Bearing this in mind it is remarkable that only in Isa 6 we find an explicit connection between the Seraphim and the throne of YHWH, while otherwise in biblical references they seem to belong to different contexts. So the parallelism of Cherubim and Seraphim in later Jewish writings has to be taken primarily as the result of the influence a text as important as Isa 6 had on the tradition of YHWH as king. If one asks for older conceptions of Cherubim and Seraphim in the religion of ancient Israel one must follow carefully the two different traces indicated by the above mentioned number and distribution of the terms. Before we shall have a closer look at the two biblical terms separately, some *general features* of beings like Cherubim and Seraphim should be noted from the perspective of a history of religions of the Ancient Near East.

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5   In this article I cannot deal with the concept of the Cherubim in the tabernacle of the Priestly Writer in more detail, but see, for example, Keel, Herrlichkeitserscheinung 151-156.

2.1 General Remarks on the so called "Mischwesen" in the Ancient Near East

Seraphim and Cherubim both belong to the so called "Mischwesen", *hybrid figures*.[6] This means that they are *combining attributes from various animals and from humans*, resulting in a new complex entity. Imaginary beings like that are common and widespread throughout the ancient cultures of Egypt, the Near East and Greece.[7] They fulfil different functions in literary and iconographical contexts. One main area where they play an important role (apart from the sphere of demonology) is the *symbolism of ruling*, in both the realms of the divine and of humans.[8] The addition of capabilities like flying (wings of eagles), physical power and fertility (the bull), threatening features and behaviour (e.g. the lion's roar, talons of the eagle, scorpion's tails, snake's bites) and, finally, wisdom and skills (human heads[9]) culminate in pictures of superiority. We find such beings in the Ancient Near East especially in contexts where it seemed necessary *to represent power* and *to prevent from evil*.

Concerning their connection to myth especially one point is worth mentioning. In Ancient Mesopotamia an important relationship exists between the monsters of the army of Tiamat (the female pre-goddess and a snake-like dragon) and later symbolism of *guardians at gateways*. The mighty creatures of the time of cosmogony, which according to the Enuma elish once were defeated by Marduk himself, were transformed into *protective spirits*.[10] This does not mean that they were not imagined as dangerous any more, but that they seemed mostly "domesticated" and salutary.[11] A certain ambiguity remained, thus.[12] In their role as guardian spirits they were not only connected to the *time* of the beginning of the world but also to *space*. Ancient city states very often fol-

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6   See for a detailed comparison of biblical Cherubim and Ancient Near Eastern "Mischwesen" Metzger, Königsthron 309-325.

7   Cf. Welten, Mischwesen, and, with special regard to Mesopotamia, Wiggermann, Mischwesen; Green, Mischwesen; see further the reference-work Black / Green, Gods.

8   See, for example, with regard to the Achaemenid hybrid figures in the residences of the Great Kings, combining elements from different Ancient Near Eastern pictorial traditions, Root, King.

9   Concerning the ambivalence of the human parts of the "Mischwesen" and the question what connotations especially the human head might have had for antique thought see Wiggermann, Mischwesen 246, quoting approvingly C.J. Gadd and A.H. Layard ("the union of the greatest intellectual and physical powers"). For a different point of view see Keel, Herrlichkeitserscheinung 138-140.

10   Cf. especially Wiggermann, Spirits; Green, Spirits.

11   See Wiggermann, Mischwesen 246.

12   See Maul, Sieg.

lowed a cultural pattern which Mircea Eliade named the *"symbolism of centre"*.[13] The powers of the universe were concentrated in the main city. The inhabitants of the city believed that its temples (and palaces) were (on a mythical level) identical with the cosmic abodes of the gods. This spatial symbolism involves distinctions between the higher and the lower regions of the world (*vertical dimension*) and between its inner and outer areas (*horizontal dimension*).[14] When the ancient mind travels (in reality or imagination) through peripherical regions, the inhabitants of the distant lands seem to be strange and dangerous. So, the "Mischwesen" often were depicted as non-humans and monsters in opposition to men (for example, the scorpion-people at the entrance of the gate of the sun in the Gilgamesh epic or the *anzû*-bird as a beast of the far away mountainous regions). When tracing the traditional background of the biblical Cherubim and Seraphim, this symbolism of time and space should be remembered.

2.2 The Cherubim

The etymology of the Hebrew word *kerûḇ* has been debated for a long time. Consensus today is the possible connection with the akkadian term *kāribu* / fem. *kāribtu*, "one who blesses".[15] It denotes huge guardian figures at the gateways of Neo-Assyrian palaces. These sculptures, normally a combination of a winged bull or lion with a human head, served as *beneficient (but nonetheless ambivalent) protective figures*. This may be comparable with biblical notions. The most comprehensive description of the Cherubim in the bible is in 1Kgs 6:23-27(28). The deuteronomistic report deals with the interior equipment of the Solomonic temple.[16] According to this text, which may have preserved older traditions from pre-exilic times, the Cherubim belong to the Debir, presumably a wooden cubical structure whose predecessors and parallels

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13 Cf. Eliade, Kosmos 25-29, and Eliade, Religionen 423-444.

14 See the contributions in: Janowski / Ego, Weltbild, especially the introduction by Janowski (3-26).

15 Cf. for the Akkadian term AHw I 449; CDA² 149; see for the Hebrew word with regard to the etymological question HALAT, 2. Lieferung 473; Ges¹⁸, 3. Lieferung 570.

16 See for the analysis of 1Kgs 6 the commentaries by Noth, Könige I 95-129, Würthwein, Buch 57-70. The problem of the historical value of 1Kgs 6-7 has been debated in the last years (see, for example, van Seters, Solomon's Temple, who denies any reliable information with regard to the pre-exilic temple, while, on the other hand, Zwickel, Tempel, trusts the text in detail). It is very likely that especially the comparable large measures of the temple and it's features must be taken as a literary phenomenon, aiming at the greatness of the Israelite God, while other details (like the Cherubim throne as the central cultic symbol) seem trustworthy.

seem to be Phoenician and Egyptian *naiskoi*, the innermost chapels of the sanctuaries, serving as throne-rooms for the gods represented by their statues.[17] The text in 1Kgs 6 reports that the Cherubim were large sculpted objects made of "oil wood" and covered with gold. The text depicts the two Cherubim as standing side by side and facing the entrance of the shrine. Thus, people entering the main temple room (the Hekhal) would have encountered the two creatures in the Debir face to face. Bearing in mind this spatial position as well as iconographical evidence (see below) it is probable that they served as *the porters and guardians of the throne of YHWH*. This is further supported by the special focus on the position of the Cherubim's wings in the chapter. According to 1Kgs 6:27 their outer wings were held close to the body, while the inner wings were outstretched at the same height, meeting in the middle and forming a kind of seat.[18]

2.2.1 The Cherubim as Porters of the Throne of YHWH and Iconographical Evidence

W.F. Albright once realized that the description in 1Kgs 6 fits well with *iconographical motifs from Palestine and Phoenicia*.[19] In this light it is the well-known *Egyptian sphinx* which offers the next parallel to the shape of the biblical Cherubim. The theory is widely accepted.[20] The most famous examples from the vicinity of ancient Israel are from Byblos and Megiddo. They depict rulers sitting on thrones flanked by winged lions with human heads. The Ahirom-sarcophagus (*Fig. 1*, 13th-12th century BCE) shows the king presumably at a funeral meal. In front of him is a small table with bread and fruits. Behind the table attendants offer gifts. From Megiddo came some carved ivories, dedicated to the subject, and a small throne model (all dating from the late Bronze age, 14th-12th century BCE). On the most famous ivory carving the king of the city is pictured twice (*Fig. 2*): on the left he sits on the sphinx throne surrounded by servants, his wife and high officials. On the right he

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17 Cf. for the architectural structure of the temple of Jerusalem Weippert, Palästina 461-476, especially 464 (about the Debir); see further Zwickel, Tempel 71-83 ("Die Innenverkleidung und der Schrein"); Keel, Welt 133-150, especially 139-144 (about the Debir and Egyptian and Phoenician parallels).

18 For the position of the wings of the Cherubim see Keel, Jahwe-Visionen 23-29, and Keel, Herrlichkeitserscheinung 137-138; Metzger, Königsthron 335-367.

19 Cf. Albright, Cherubim; see further about the identifications of the Cherubim with Ancient Near Eastern hybrid figures in the research of the 20th century Metzger, Königsthron 312-318.

20 Especially since Keel refined the identification, cf. Keel, Jahwe-Visionen 15-35.

rides on a chariot in front of which two defeated enemies are walking (according to their hair-style they belong to Palestinian nomads – the *shasu* of the Egyptian sources). This Megiddo ivory illustrates well the above mentioned connection of the representation of power with the motif of the Cherubim (sphinx) throne. Going back to Egypt, we find thrones of the Pharao from the New Kingdom and earlier, flanked by lions (sometimes also with pictures of sphinxes defeating enemies on the armchair[21]). The figure of the sphinx was a prevalent Egyptian symbol both of the king and of the Sun-God.[22] Since the 7th century BCE., there are many examples of male and female deities on a sphinx throne from Phoenician homelands and from the colonies (especially Carthage, cf. *Fig. 3*). Mostly the enthroned deities are sitting under a canopy or in a chapel (often with winged sun discs above it). There they greet and accept worshippers depicted usually standing in front of the throne. This scenery is modelled on the image of an audience before a ruler – a very well known topic in ancient societies. It offers the closest iconographical parallel to the psalms where supplicants seek contact with YHWH in the same language reserved otherwise to courtly audiences.[23]

So, the iconographical type of a king or deity sitting on his Cherubim throne may well be an old cultural heritage in Israel. This should even be true despite the fact that in the biblical writings there is no clear evidence for the concept in pre-exilic times. In the presumably old visionary report of Isa 6 the Cherubim are not mentioned (see below). On the other hand the occurrences of the epitheton *YHWH … yōšēb hak-kerûbîm*, "YHWH enthroned on the Cherubim", in the Psalms and otherwise, seem all to be later than exile (1Sam 4:4, 2Sam 6:2 // 1Chr 16:6, Ps 80:2; 99:1, Isa 37:16 // 2Kgs 19:15). The single cherub in Ps 18:11 // 2Sam 22:11, serving as YHWH's heavenly "driving vehicle" (connected with the verb *rākab*), is somewhat different. The theophany conception of Ps 18, mentioning the cherub, seems to be influenced by the throne conception of Jerusalem and by Ancient Near Eastern images of special beasts attributed to gods as well.[24] Even if many modern scholars date the psalms in question in the Persian or Hellenistic periods

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21   Cf. Metzger, Königsthron Plate 32, Fig. 231a, 231c, 232 (armchairs of thrones from the reign of Thutmosis IV); cf. Keel, Jahwe-Visionen 90 Fig. 49.

22   See, for example, Bonnet, Sphinx.

23   Cf. Hartenstein, "Angesicht Gottes", and, more detailed, Hartenstein, Angesicht JHWHs.

24   See also, for example, Mettinger, Dethronement 32-36 (with the thesis that the single cherub in Ps 18 evokes the concept of the theophany of YHWH, the storm-god, driving in his heavenly war chariot). See further Hartenstein, Wolkendunkel 129-134.

there are good reasons to believe *that important contents dealing with the symbolism of the temple of Jerusalem derived from earlier traditions*.[25] It is a matter of fact that in the Ancient Near East basic cultic conceptions of a sanctuary do not change so much during the centuries. This can further be illustrated by two interesting details: the relationship of the Cherubim to the *stylized tree* and the question of *aniconism* of YHWH in the temple.

2.2.2 The Cherubim as Guardians of the "Holy Tree"

In 1Kgs 6 the Cherubim are not only mentioned as a pair of sculpted figurines in the Debir, but also as a part of the decoration carved on the walls and the doors of the Hekhal.[26] According to 1Kgs 6:29,32,35 and Ezek 41:17-20 (cf. Gen 3:24; Ezek 28:14,16) they were depicted there as *guardians of the sacred tree*. We cannot follow here in detail the ongoing debate on this widespread, archaic iconographical motif.[27] But one should notice that the Phoenician art of the Iron Age shows a lot of examples of sphinxes or griffins (sometimes also with ibexes or goats) flanking the stylized tree which – combining attributes of various plants – belongs surely to the divine world.[28] However, there is not only one singular meaning of the "holy tree" throughout the Ancient Near East. One must try to reconstruct possible connotations due to every context.[29] Having this in mind, the sphinxes, flanking stylized trees in the Iron Age art of Phoenicia and Palestine (*Fig. 4*), seemed to be closely connected to the *representation of power,* too (divine and human kingdom).[30] The iconographical evidence fits in well with those biblical texts which also show the Cherubim as guardians of the *garden of YHWH* (Gen 3:24; cf. Ezek 28:11-19) and as symbols of his *world order* (temple decoration). The symbolism of the temple in the psalms involves fertility and beneficence for all living creatures (cf. Ps 36; 104:14-15,27-28; 136:25; 145:15-16; 147:7-8), granted by YHWH, the creator in his residence.[31] Being supporting figures of the throne and guardians of

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25   Cf., among others, Janowski, Keruben, and Janowski, Wohnung.

26   Cf. especially Metzger, Keruben, and Metzger, Jahwe.

27   See, for example, Metzger, Zeder, and Metzger, Weltenbaum; Hartenstein / Jeremias, "JHWH" 92-111; Keel / Uehlinger, Göttinnen 237-321.

28   See the pictures of the motif on seals and ivories in the literature cited in the preceding note.

29   See for the methodological questions Hartenstein, Ikonographie.

30   See Keel / Uehlinger, Göttinnen 265-266.

31   Cf. Metzger, Keruben.

the tree (of "life" Gen 2-3) the biblical Cherubim belong to the inner-most sphere of *YHWH Zebaoth*, "YHWH of Hosts".[32] So, the correspon-dance between the primeval garden (the "paradise") and the temple decoration seems well recognizable with regard to the Cherubim. In Gen 3:24 Cherubim are ordered to watch over the passage to the tree of life (in this context probably a symbol of YHWH himself). And in the difficult passage Ezek 28:11-19 there is also a cherub in the garden of Eden.[33] In the centre of that mythic place the Phoenician king of Tyre seems to live in a godlike manner. According to Ezek 28:14 the cherub seems also to fulfil the function of a *protective spirit (of the king?)*. One can assume that the biblical Cherubim were connected with a symbol-ism of centre (see above). Concerning the iconographical and textual evidence, it shows Phoenician influence. The Cherubim obviously par-ticipate both in the mythic *time* of the primeval origins (the symbolism of the garden of God) and in the mythic *space* of YHWH's abode (the holy tree of the temple decoration).

2.2.3 The Question of Aniconism related to the Throne of YHWH

A second aspect of the above mentioned concept of the Cherubim throne seems important: the question of *aniconism*. Much has been writ-ten in the last decade on this topic.[34] Being well aware of the fact that some scholars now prefer the hypothesis of an anthropomorphic cult statue of YHWH in the pre-exilic temple, there are better reasons to assume that the throne of YHWH was empty.[35] Bronze Age sanctuaries in Palestine and in Syria had a remarkable tradition of what the He-brew bible calls *maṣṣēḇôṯ*, "standing stones". In the context of cultic installations they probably served as symbols of the gods (or deified ancestors) and seemed to designate in some cases also a symbolical en-trance or doorway. Therefore, they embodied in one and the same ob-ject the main features of a sanctuary. That is probably why they were called *betyl / baitylos*, "house of god" (cf. the biblical etiology of the

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32 See the general remarks on the concept by Mettinger, Yahweh, and Mettinger, De-thronement 19-37; for the connection with Gen 2-3 see, for example, Hartenstein, Beobachtungen 282-286.

33 See for Ezek 28,11-19 Zimmerli, Ezechiel II 671-689, for the cherub on the mountain 684-86.

34 See for a documentation of the ongoing debate van der Toorn, Image; Janowski / Zchomelidse, Sichtbarkeit.

35 See for the thesis of an anthropomorphic statue of YHWH the contributions by Niehr, Search, and Uehlinger, Cult Statuary, – and, for the contrary point of view, Mettinger, Aniconism.

sanctuary of Bethel in Gen 28).[36] In Arad, the only undoubtedly Iron Age Judaean sanctuary excavated until today, a single stone stele, without any pictorial elements, was the representation of YHWH in the niche. Furthermore, O. Keel pointed to the fact that biblical references to the ark sometimes speak of (two) stones connected with this bin-shaped object.[37] There are no grave arguments against the hypothesis that aniconic traditions of representing YHWH may well be of old origin in Palestine. In his monograph "No Graven Image?" T.N.D. Mettinger gave a comprehensive overview of aniconism in the Ancient Near East.[38] There are especially Phoenician examples from the 7th century B.C.E. onwards which combine the symbol of a sphinx (Cherubim) throne either with an empty seat ("empty space aniconism") or, interesting enough, with a betyl on the back of the seat (*Fig. 5a-b*, a combination with the standing stone symbolism[39]).

Concerning the *mental image* ancient Israelites may have had confronting such objects there can be no doubt that *the shape of YHWH was anthropomorphic*.[40] But this had not necessarily to be realized in a material representation. One has to distinguish between a "mental icono graphy"[41], based for example on the images from cultic poetry (such as the Psalms), and pictures on material objects. The pre-exilic Cherubim throne participates in both fields. It was a concrete symbol of YHWH as king without showing his figure. Then the explicit prohibition of images in Israel (during and after the exile) was formulated in using an old cultural heritage of "aniconism" as a distinctive mark of Jewish religion.[42]

2.3 The Seraphim

The term "Seraphim" (*śᵉrāp̄îm*) is the plural form of *śārap̄* whose etymology, as in the case of the "Cherubim", is still a matter of dispute. The most likely theory connects it with the Hebrew verb *śārap̄*, "to burn /

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36 See Ribichini, Baetyl.
37 See Keel, Jerusalemer Tempel 262-264, who guesses that – similar to Bedouin sanctuaries – it may have been originally only one stone connected with the ark.
38 Mettinger, Image.
39 Cf. Mettinger, Image 100-106 (sphinx thrones from Sidon); Metzger, Königsthron 275-276; cf. Metzger, Kerubenthroner 113-116, for the decoration of these thrones with the "holy tree".
40 See Smith, Form; Hartenstein, "Gestalt", and Hartenstein, Angesicht JHWHs.
41 For this terminology cf. Mettinger, Image 20.
42 See the contributions by Hossfeld, Werden, and Frevel, Bildnis.

to destroy".[43] Then the "Seraphim" should refer to beings which were able to annihilate and to incinerate by flames. Therefore, a description like the *"burning ones"* seems to be adequate. In Isa 6:2-4 the Seraphim are described as (at least two) beings "standing above him", that is over the head of the enthroned figure of YHWH (see below, 3.2). So, in the vision, which evokes the setting of the divine council, the verb *ʿāmaḏ*, usually designating servants who stand in front of their seated master (with *ʿal*, "before"), is specified with regard to the unique creatures: according to v.2 they have (three pairs of) *wings*, holding them in the air. Despite the fact that the Seraphim in Isa 6 seem to have anthropomorphic features, too (a voice able to utter human words, but also to shatter the door [v.3-4; cf. the speech in v.7], and a hand to take a charcoal from the altar and to interact with the prophet [v.6-7]), most modern scholars agree that they should be taken here as *serpent-like beings*. This conclusion is based on two arguments: The other biblical occurrences of the term show them in proximity to serpents, and, furthermore, there is clear evidence from iconographical sources of the Iron Age art of Palestine in the 8th-7th century BCE that the image of winged serpents played an important role (probably as protective spirits), especially in Judah. To give a more detailed view of this thesis I will start with the *biblical notions*.

2.3.1 Biblical Notions of the Seraphim beside Isa 6[44]

In Isa 14:29 (an oracle against the Philistines) and in Isa 30:6 (an announcement of judgement against the people of Jerusalem who seek support from Egypt) there is found a "flying Seraph" (like in Isa 6:2). In Isa 14:29 the term is used as a metaphor designating very likely the dreadful power of the new Assyrian successor to the throne (in a climactic arrangement of serpent, viper, winged Seraph the last is most emphasized). In Isa 30:6 we learn about the geographical realm where one imagined to encounter the "flying Seraph": "Through a land of dire distress, the haunt of lioness and roaring lion, poisonous snake and flying Seraph they carry their goods [that is the gifts for Egypt] on the backs of donkeys".[45] Very similar in this regard are Deut 8:15 and Num 21:6,8. Serpent-like Seraphim are depicted there as the dangerous in-

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43   See Mettinger, Seraphim; Jaroš, Seraf(im); Rüterswörden, *śārap̄*.
44   See Hartenstein, Unzugänglichkeit 191-196; Rüterswörden, *śārap̄* 887-891; Keel, Jahwe-Visionen 71-74.
45   Translation taken from Blenkinsopp, Isaiah 412 (with alteration "flying seraph" instead of "flying serpent").

habitants of distant desert regions, too (together with scorpions [Deut 8:15], and as a plague, caused by YHWH, together with other snakes [Num 21:6,8]). So, in four of a total of five texts (with the exception of Isa 6) the Seraphim participate in the *symbolism of the desert* – a zone of lifelessness and terror. Like in the above mentioned mythical geography in other Ancient Near Eastern cultures the desert in biblical thought was not only the region of the origins where the people once met their god. In most cases it is merely the opposite to the promised land where YHWH guaranteed life, wealth and prosperity.[46] Remarkably also the Assyrian ruler Esarhaddon, in his report on the campaign against the Arabs and Egypt (which may be contemporary to the Isaianic references), speaks of beasts of the desert, characterized as "two-headed serpents" and (serpent-like?) beings "whose wings were batting".[47] Henri Frankfort, in his famous essay on the status of reality ancient men conceded to dreams and visions, once has noted with regard to this text: "Hallucinations, too, are real. We find in the official annals of Asarhaddon of Assyria a record of fabulous monsters – two-headed serpents and green, winged creatures – which the exhausted troops had seen in the most trying section of their march, the arid Sinai Desert."[48] As a result, we should bear in mind that in Isa 6 Seraphim are described as winged superhuman beings, surrounding the throne of YHWH. But the lack of any more detailed description leaves us in doubt what shape they would have. In the light of the above cited additional biblical notions it is likely that in Isa 6 they should be serpent-like, too (despite their simultaneous human attributes). We should further be aware of the biblical Seraphim as related to the desert and to other dangerous beasts living there. Is this true for Isa 6 as well? The *iconographical approach* helps to prepare for an answer which the exegetical remarks will finally try to give (see below 3.2).

2.3.2 The Iconographical Evidence from Palestine (Winged Serpents)

Focussing on the motif of *winged serpents on Iron Age stamp seals* from Palestine (*Fig. 6a-b*) K. Joines and O. Keel voted for their snake-like appearance in Isa 6, too.[49] Other scriptural references besides Isa 6 and the archaeological findings seem to fit in with one another. The tradi-

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46 See for the symbolism of the desert in the Hebrew Bible Talmon, *midbār*.
47 Citation taken from ANET³ 292(3) (10th campaign: annalistic text BM K 3082 + S 2027 + K 3086, reverse); cf. Borger, Inschriften 112-113; see further Wiseman, Serpents.
48 Frankfort, Introduction 12.
49 Joines, Serpents; Keel, Jahwe-Visionen 74-110.

tional background of the Palestinian pictures of serpents is – compara-
ble to the Cherubim – an *ancient Egyptian figure, the "uraeus"*.[50] The term
is a loan-word from Greek, taken to designate *the cobra* which plays an
important role in Egyptian symbolism. Cobra figures were worn at the
forehead of the Pharao and of the gods to protect them by their mighty
"fire" (that is their poison). So, the word "flame" is one of the Egyptian
designations for the uraeus, presumably a more than accidental parallel
to the above mentioned Hebrew etymology of "Seraph". Even if there
were other attempts to enlighten the traditional background of the
Seraphim (such as griffins, winged human figures and Baal's seven
thunders and lightning bolts[51]) the trace back to the Egyptian cobra
seems the most plausible. With regard to Isa 6 two points at last have to
be mentioned: The winged uraei on Palestinian scarabs and seals have
two or four wings, but never six as in the vision of Isaiah (cf. *Fig. 6a-b*;
so, the author of the report very likely took the liberty of characterizing
them differently[52]). And their unique position "above" the enthroned
YHWH, which for later interpreters was sometimes offensive, could be
perhaps explained with regard to architectural friezes at the top of
Egyptian and Phoenician chapels, showing rows of uraei (without
wings, *Fig. 8*).[53] Some examples of the iconographical motif from Israel
and Judah finally show the uraei even together with the holy tree, with
griffins and sphinxes / Cherubim (*Fig. 7, cf. Fig. 6b)*. So, it is not impos-
sible that in ancient Israel and Judah they belonged to the guardian
figures of YHWH's abode even before Isa 6 was written. Another the-
ory is that they were not much related to the "official" cult, but played
an important role in "popular religion".[54] In any case the author of Isa 6
picked them up to emphasize his message. He did this in spite of the
fact that the more common Cherubim would have been the first choice
to picture the enthroned YHWH. So, *it has to be explained why in Isa 6 the
serpent-like Seraphim play such an important role*. Bringing them into the
temple (of course in a visionary context) Isa 6 added some new quali-
ties to them, and even altered their appearence. The same was true with
the Cherubim in the later visions of Ezekiel (see below). So, it has been

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50   Keel, Jahwe-Visionen 83-92; Mettinger, Seraphim.

51   See for the thesis of a derivation from Egyptian griffins Görg, Funktion; Morenz /
     Schorch, Seraph, and, alternatively, the reasons to assume winged anthropomorphic
     figures listed by Rüterswörden, *śārap̄* 889-890; for an identification with the weapons
     of the storm-god see Day, Echoes.

52   Cf. Keel, Jahwe-Visionen 110-114.

53   See Keel, Jahwe-Visionen 92-103.

54   Keel, Jahwe-Visionen 116-121; Görg, Funktion 217-222.

– as stated above – the rendering of the authors of the prophetic visions that formed the later image of the Seraphim and Cherubim.

3. Seraphim and Cherubim in the Visionary Reports in Isa 6 and Ezek 1-3; 8-11

3.1 General Remarks on Exegetical Approaches to the Prophetic Writings

In modern research the approach to understand the peculiarity of Old Testament prophecy has changed remarkably. The influential picture of the prophets, established by famous scholars of the early 20th century such as B. Duhm, H. Gunkel and G. Hölscher, depended on the image of "great spiritual persons". The prophets, considered to be religious geniuses, warned the people because of their sins and tried to reestablish ethics in order to fulfil the will of YHWH which had been abandoned. Most modern scholars now agree that such an image was indebted to the deuteronomistic point of view since the 7th century BCE. But this cannot exclude that there were forerunners among the prophets who in turn influenced later Deuteronomists. In any case, one must distinguish between the *literate shape* of prophetic scriptures (later transformed into book-compositions) and the *oral messages* of the prophets, restricted to certain historical situations. For example, Jörg Jeremias pointed out in his commentaries that *the border between scriptural and oral prophecy must be taken as a one-way passage*.[55] We do not have the means to reestablish earlier oral stages due to the fact that from the beginning the literary shape of prophetic writings depended on *selection and addition*. What we can try to describe are the writings as products of an ongoing revision ("Fortschreibung"[56]). The hermeneutical process of the growth of the prophetic books in itself is a matter of great interest for modern research. Applying the methods of *redactional and traditional history* scholars try to identify what stages of the literary process enriched the original writings which were a literary phenomenon from the very beginning.

However, it is still a matter of constant dispute what made the Israelite prophecy special in the context of Ancient Near Eastern omina and

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55 Jeremias, Prophet Hosea, and Jeremias, Prophet Amos, and Jeremias, Propheten.
56 See, for example, Steck, Prophetenbücher.

oracles.[57] Here we cannot follow the discussion in detail, but should bear in mind that it is more probable that the Israelites and Judaeans created prophetic literature not only as an undertaking to cope with the downfalls of their communities in 722 / 720 and 587 BCE. Prophetic literature in Israel, then, would have had only a retrospective point of view, creating oracles of judgement as *vaticinia ex eventu*. In my opinion it is more likely that the documentation of prophetic messages started in the 8th century BCE because in current oracles, dealing with future punishment through YHWH, *historical events seemed to be truly predicted*. Thus, the beginning of prophetic literature could be compared with a king's archive where important documents of his reign were stored.[58] Likewise, YHWH, the (heavenly) king, stored his messages to the people and their leaders through the prophets by literary means. So, later generations – in re-reading the prophetic writings – were enabled to understand better why and what the course of history was from YHWH's point of view.

The visionary reports of Isa 6 and Ezek 1-3; 8-11 are important for the debate outlined above. Both are explicitly situated by dates in critical historical situations (Isa 6:1; Ezek 1:1) and both *give essential clues to the intention of the literary units they introduce*. Isa 6, other than Ezek 1-3, does not prelude the whole book of Isaiah, but is the beginning of the so called *"Denkschrift"*, "Isaian memoir", which encompasses Isa 6-8(9)*. These chapters are commonly accepted as one of the old nucleuses of the book of Isaiah. They seem to originate in the end of the 8th or the first half of the 7th century BCE.[59] With regard to the topic of this article it should be noted that – despite other scholarly opinions[60] – such a date for the vision of Isaiah fits in well with the pictorial language used in the text. The Seraphim in Isa 6 especially support this date in the light of the above mentioned iconographical evidence.

On the other hand, concerning the visions of the heavenly throne sphere in Ezek 1-3; 8-11 it is clear that their elaborate poetic language derived from ancient Mesopotamian sources and, similarily, from former Jerusalem traditions. Both were combined to form something new (see below 3.3). A date in the exilic period would be most convenient to explain the singular synthesis. We shall now have a closer look at the rendering of Seraphim and Cherubim in these texts.

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57   Cf. the different points of view by Jeremias, Proprium, and Kratz, Propheten.
58   See Hartenstein, Archiv.
59   Cf. especially the detailed analysis and interpretation by Barthel, Prophetenwort.
60   Cf. Kaiser, Buch; Becker, Jesaja.

3.2 The Seraphim in Isa 6[61]

The vision of the prophet is dated in "the year king Uzziah died" (Isa 6:1), that is about the year 734 BCE. Deaths of kings in the Ancient Near East often were acknowleged as times of crisis and as signs of a disturbed world-order. Therefore, the situative context of the vision Isa 6 presumably is not accidental. Furthermore, the redactors situate the following chapters Isa 7-8 in the historical setting of the so called "Syro-Ephraimite crisis". Within the broader framework of the Assyrian expansion to the west Isa 7 focusses on the political behaviour of the Judaean leaders facing the fear of the coalition of Israel (Ephraim) and the Aramaeans of Damascus. Chapter 8:1-4 is the conclusion of this topic, addressing the king and his attendants, while Isa 8:6-8 are dealing primarily with the false loyalties of the inhabitants of Jerusalem and their consequences (announcement of an imminent Assyrian occupation of Judah). The whole "memoir" Isa 6-8 intentionally summarizes the message of Isaiah from about 734 to 701 BCE. The chapters are based on oracles given at different times.[62] The selection of prophetic oracles was arranged – presumably in the first half of the 7th century BCE – to a kind of report, *a document of YHWH "hiding his face" from Judah* (cf. Isa 8:16-18). Finally, this "memoir" has been situated at the beginning of Isaiah's activity (about 734-733 BCE, cf. Isa 6:1). The visionary narrative Isa 6, thus, should be read as closely related to the forthcoming political events and gives an interpretation for them from YHWH's point of view.

There has been an intensive scholarly dispute whether Isa 6 mirrors *the inaugural call of the prophet* or whether it should be taken as *a report of the prophet's commissioning with a special (political) mission* in the divine assembly.[63] Judging from the literary position the composers of the "memoir" assigned to Isa 6 there are better arguments to support the latter. Nevertheless, some features of the vision show similarities to other prophetic call narratives (Jer 1; Ezek 1-3). Bearing this in mind we shall look at the first scene of the text (v.1-4):

> "1 In the year king Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting on a throne raised up high, while his hems filled (verb *mālēʾ*) the throne room (*hêḵal*). 2 Seraphim were standing from above him. Each had six (pair of) wings. With two they

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61 See for this section Hartenstein, Unzugänglichkeit.

62 Isa 7 includes two former oracles from the time of king Ahas (about 733 BCE); Isa 8:1-4 can be dated at the time before 720 BCE, while Isa 8:6-8 seems to mirror the situation before the siege of Jerusalem in 701 BCE.

63 See for a discussion of the problem Steck, Bemerkungen; Keel, Jahwe-Visionen 46 note 2; Hartenstein, Unzugänglichkeit 24-28; 205-216; Liss, Prophetie 34-71, especially 55-60.

covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two
they were flying. 3 And one cried out to the other saying, 'Holy, holy, holy
is YHWH of Hosts; the whole earth is full (substantive $m^e l\bar{o}$) of his glory'. 4
And the 'pegs' of the threshold shook by the sound of the voice of the one
who cried, and the house began to fill (verb $m\bar{a}l\bar{e}$) with smoke."

The first part of the vision is situated in a setting that includes elements
of the temple, and, simultaneously, of the mythical abode of YHWH.[64]
The "thresholds" and the "house" in v.4 clearly belong to the architec-
tural features of the sanctuary. On the other hand, the very high throne
in v.1 and the huge figure of the seated god, indicated by the "hems" of
his garment, transcend the spatial dimensions of the building. It is still
a matter of debate whether the relation of the temple to the divine is
expressed in Isa 6 in a traditional way or with certain innovative fea-
tures.[65]

However, it is evident that the narrative especially stresses two
elements: The *divine holiness* and the *special circumstances of the revelation
of this holiness in the vision*. The Seraphim are a decisive part of the latter.
As stated above, they never appear connected with the divine throne
apart from the vision in Isa 6. So, the fact that they are described in
much more detail than YHWH himself is remarkable. We do not get
any hint in the text where exactly their position is, in relation to the
throne. Bearing in mind the principles of *symmetry* and *frontality* in
Ancient Near Eastern art, one may suppose that they *flank the throne on
two sides*. If that is right there are perhaps only *two* Seraphim assumed
in the vision (nevertheless, the formula in v.3 "and one cried out to the
other" not exclusively denotes only two[66]). We also do not know
whether they are looking in the same direction as YHWH or whether
they are facing him (as indicated by the verb *ʿāmaḏ* in v.1). Most em-
phasized are their *very loud voices* that make the thresholds tremble,
and, thus, (implicitly) the whole building (v.4a). The sound evokes the
thunder-like voice of YHWH (cf. Ps 29). The use of the singular form
("by the sound of the voice *of the one* who cried", v.4a) seems to confirm
this.[67] The Seraphim in Isa 6:1-4, therefore, act *in a unity with their lord*,
magnifying the power of the "king, YHWH of Hosts" (v.5). What ex-
actly, then, is the function of the – presumably serpent-like – beings in
the vision? The answers depend on different understandings of the
vision as a whole.

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64   See especially Keel, Jahwe-Visionen 47-56; Metzger, Wohnstatt; Hartenstein,
     Unzugänglichkeit passim, especially 11-23.
65   See, for example, Irsigler, Gott 142-43; Hartenstein, Unzugänglichkeit 41-56.
66   For a discussion cf. Keel, Jahwe-Visionen 114-115; Irsigler, Gott 143-144 note 41.
67   Cf. Hartenstein, Unzugänglichkeit 186.

1) The most common interpretation focusses on the *holiness of god* in v.3 ("Holy, holy, holy is YHWH of Hosts"). O. Keel and others refer to the fact that the Seraphim have *to cover their bodies*, from head to feet (v.2).[68] So, the mighty creatures are not able (or allowed) to look at the face of the Holy One – this was indeed the way later Jewish interpreters understood the vision. That the author (in the 8th or 7th century BCE) chose just these very winged creatures is then explained by the wide-spread iconography on seals (see above) and their possible veneration as magical protective spirits at the time. In bringing them into the temple the author of Isa 6 would have used them to emphasize YHWH's greatness.[69]

2) I would like to state a somewhat different view. In my dissertation I tried to reconstruct the traditio- and religio-historical background of Isa 6 as well as the intention of the vision in its literary and political context.[70] Two interrelated observations lead me to understand Isa 6 as a *vision of judgement*:[71] In v.1-4 it has often been overlooked that the "Leitwort" (key word) *mālēʾ*, "to fill / to be full with", is essential for the thematic structure.[72] There is an equivalence of YHWH's garment *filling* the throne room (v.1) and the smoke *filling* the whole house (v.4b). And further there is a correspondence of YHWH's presence in the temple, indicated by his (presumably shining) garments (v.1), and his *kābôd*, "splendour / glory", in the world (v.3: "the whole earth is *full* of his glory"). E. Cassin, in her excellent monograph on the divine splendour in Ancient Mesopotamia, showed how such symbolic equations were common in temple concepts of the Ancient Near East.[73] It seems not to be pure coincidence, then, that in the well-known Hittite myth of the disappearance of the god Telipinu the motif of *the temple filled with smoke* indicates the vanishing of the angry storm-god, while – as a consequence – *the whole country turns to waste*.[74] In my opinion this is a surprising parallel to Isa 6, where, in v.11, we read the following:

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68   Keel, Jahwe-Visionen 110-114.

69   Keel, Jahwe-Visionen 113; 124.

70   Hartenstein, Unzugänglichkeit.

71   A somewhat similar interpretation as a vision of judgement was given before by Knierim, Vocation, and by Steck, Bemerkungen.

72   See more detailed Hartenstein, Unzugänglichkeit 78-109.

73   Cassin, Splendeur.

74   See the texts in: Hoffner, Hittite Myths 14-37. It is remarkable that – despite the different gods and goddesses of whom the disappearance is reported – there is the constant formula of divine absence: "Mist seized the windows. Smoke [seized] the house" which is repeated vice versa as the first sign of the return of the god who has been reconciled: "Telipinu came back home to his house and took account of his land. The mist released the windows, the smoke released the house." (Hoffner 14; 17;

"Then I asked, 'How long, O Lord?' And he replied, 'Until cities lie deserted without inhabitants, houses without occupants, and the land left a waste / desolation (*šᵉmāmāh*).'"

Isa 6 seems to presuppose a similar cultural concept of the correspondance between divine presence and absence in the temple on the one hand, and life and wealth versus lifelessness and desolation in the world on the other. That the temple is "full of smoke" (Isa 6:4) should be interpreted, then, not only as a mere temporary phenomenon, but as a symbol foreshadowing the judgement of v.11. It evokes the concept of YHWH "hiding his face" in anger (Isa 8:17). This is supported by the common semantical opposition of *mᵉlōʾ*, 'fullness' (Isa 6:3), and *šᵉmāmāh*, 'waste / desolation / emptiness' (Isa 6:11), in the Hebrew Bible.[75] Bearing all this in mind, it is likely that the emphasis on YHWH's holiness in Isa 6 has a special connotation (beside its more general sense): it seems to point *to the judgement of YHWH as an aspect of his holiness*.[76] One only has to compare Isa 6 with the woe-oracles in Isa 5, especially 5:16-17. Here the justice and holiness of YHWH Zebaoth (cf. Isa 6:5) manifest themselves in turning the land into deserted ruins:

"16 But the Lord of Hosts is exalted in justice, and the Holy God shows himself holy in righteousness. 17 And lambs will graze as in their pasture, and fatlings [strangers] will feed upon the ruins."[77]

If this interpretation is right, one should finally remember the above mentioned connotations of the Seraphim as *dangerous beasts of the desert* in the other biblical references (above 2.3.1). *Were the "burning ones" intentionally chosen by the author to underline his vision of judgement?*[78] That Isa 6 is a text of multiple layers of meaning is certain. Therefore, this interpretation does not exclude others, but seems suitable to specify them. As we shall finally see, the visions of Ezekiel made their own use of the singular text, taking its meaning obviously – at least in Ezek 8-11 – as a statement of divine judgement, too.

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cf. further 20; 24; 25; 28; 35). See the detailed analysis of the Hittite motif in: Hartenstein, Unzugänglichkeit 150-160.

75   See Hartenstein, Unzugänglichkeit 166-182 (above all, the explicit references of the opposition *šmm – mlʾ* in the prophetic texts Ezek 12:19; 19:7; 30:12; 32:15 [announcements of judgment], cf. further Ezek 26:2 for the similar opposition of *ḥrb – mlʾ*).

76   See Hartenstein, Unzugänglichkeit 196-202.

77   Translation taken from Williamson, Isaiah 357 (cf. 356-376, for an exegesis of the section).

78   Then, the fact that they cover their bodies could be also understood as a sign for the judgement ahead – if they show their "burning" faces, the desolation will come; see Hartenstein, Unzugänglichkeit 195-196.

3.3 The Cherubim in Ezek 1-3; 8-11

The literary growth of the visions of the book of Ezekiel has been an important object of research. That there were several stages of revision, related to the process of the shaping of the Masoretic book, is no matter of dispute.[79] Nevertheless, there is no consensus which theory offers the most plausible solution. In the following outline I do not presuppose a special model of literary evolution of Ezekiel.[80] Instead, for the purpose of this article, I will consider the texts in their final shape. Then, it is important to notice the system of chronological order which connects the visions throughout the book. After the inaugural vision of the heavenly throne-sphere in Ezek 1-3, the chapters 8-11 are essential for the whole composition, because they show the judgement over Jerusalem in a visionary scenery culminating in the *departure of the glory (kāḇôḏ) of YHWH from the temple and the city*.[81] The later part of the book, Ezek 40-48, deals with the renewal of temple and society in Judah and is also situated in a visionary context. Ezek 43:4-5 clearly refers to chapters 8-11 showing that the basis for the new salutary period ahead (after the exile) is the fact *that the glory (kāḇôḏ) of God has returned to the temple from hiding* (see below). It is surely not accidental that one of the great connections between the main parts of Ezekiel uses the *same paradigma as Isa 6* (as I understand it*)*: the interruption of the contact with God in the temple, symbolized by the "darkening" or disappearance of his glory on the one hand (Isa 6 and Ezek 8-11), and the restitution of the cultic access to YHWH, symbolized by the return of his splendour, on the other hand (Ezek 43). It is likely that we here find a chain of prophetic tradition.

The superhuman beings, surrounding the throne of God, are one of the main aspects of the re-reading of Isa 6 (and other Old Testament texts) in Ezekiel. To specify the issue we shall focus on two aspects: The *change of cosmology / world-view* in the visions of Ezekiel and – depending on this change – the *new picture of the porters of the throne*. A remarkable alteration with regard to the implicit world-view is visible at once in the first verse of the book which introduces the visionary call report (Ezek 1:1):[82]

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79   See, for example, the contributions in: Lust, Ezekiel, and the commentary by Pohlmann, Prophet.

80   It should be mentioned, at least, that the voluminous commentary of Zimmerli offers a lot of very valuable observations until today; cf. Zimmerli, Ezechiel.

81   See Hossfeld, Tempelvision; Hartenstein, Unzugänglichkeit 140-144.

82   Cf. Zimmerli, Ezechiel I 46; Hartenstein, Wolkendunkel 148-149.

"In the thirtieth year, in the forth (month), on the fifth day of the month, as I was among the exiles by the river Chebar, the heavens opened and I saw visions of God."

Far away from Jerusalem YHWH's throne cannot be understood as connected solely with the temple anymore. Instead, *"the heavens opened"* – the divine king has a residence from which he is able to communicate with his prophet everywhere, even in the foreign land of captivity. One should remember that in Isa 6 there were no explicit hints where to locate the mythic abode of YHWH. This does not exclude that it was related to heaven there, too, but all the emphasis in the Isaian vision lies on the unbreakable bond joining the high raised throne of God (a variation of the symbol of a cosmic mountain) and the temple building. It was one of the consequences of the destruction of the temple 587 BCE that *the cosmic abode of YHWH gained a somewhat autonomous significance* (cf. the increasing importance of the explicit location of YHWH "in the heaven[s]" since the exile[83]). The idea of the heavenly sanctuary in the Second Temple period was shaped more and more in detail in different traditions of the Old Testament as well as in later Jewish writings.[84] The idea – and this is important – never dissociated entirely from temple symbolism, but became increasingly a source of a creative "thinking" of the explicit monotheism of YHWH, the creator of heaven and earth.

The inaugural vision of Ezekiel on the banks of a Babylonian river is a very fine example for this development. What the prophet sees in his imagination is something new due to the situation of the exiles. The throne of God has clearly *cosmological and universal dimensions* now. The inner eye of the visionary follows it's outlines from the bottom to the top, beginning with the *four porters of the throne sphere, which Ezek 10:1 identifies with the traditional Cherubim*.[85] Their appearance has changed remarkably in Ezek 1:5-14 compared with 1Kgs 6: Not only two, but four "living creatures", forming a kind of a fourfold structure, able to move in every direction, therefore showing a general mobility. They all have the shape of a man, but with four faces and four wings (v.5-6). Their legs resemble that of a calf (v.7). Standing upright (v.7) they move simultaneously, while one pair of their wings "were joined to another" (v.9) and the other pair covers their bodies (v.11). Finally, their *faces* are all different, one is *human*, the others are that of a *lion*, a *calf* and an *eagle*

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83   See Bartelmus, *šāmajim* –Himmel; Hartenstein, Unzugänglichkeit 18-22; Schmid, Himmelsgott.

84   See Ego, Tempeltheologie; Ego, Herr; Hartenstein, Wolkendunkel.

85   See about the debate of literary growth with regard to this identification Ruwe, Veränderung; Hartenstein, Wolkendunkel 141.

(v.10).[86] An important overall characteristic of these beings is finally given in v.13:

> "And the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance, (was) like burning coals of fire, like the appearance of torches: it (the fire) went here and there between the living creatures; and (there was) splendour belonging to the fire, and from the fire came out lightning."

The description at first sight obviously neglects the traditional type of the sphinx-like Cherubim of 1Kgs 6 (with the only exception that it also refers to winged porters of the throne). And it took little from the Seraphim of Isa 6, too (but cf. the brilliant and burning bodies of Isa 6; cf. also Isa 6:6-7 for the connex with the burning coals of fire, see also Ezek 10:2). The description shows, as Keel elaborated, primarily new elements as compared with Isa 6, first of all *the cosmological aspects of the Cherubim*.[87] They are taken from the iconographical stock of Mesopotamian cultures (different from the Egyptian influences of Isa 6).[88] The calf's legs in combination with the shape of a winged human lead to the Akkadian *kusarikku*, the so called *"bull-men"*.[89] These beings were related to the Sun-god as *porters of the firmament* and as *guardians of the gateways of the Sun*. On seal decorations from Mesopotamia (1st millenium BCE) the bull-men are depicted holding up the firmament with their raised arms, while above it the winged Sun-god makes his journey over the heavens (*Fig. 9*). In the vision Ezek 1-3 *this cosmological concept of a firm plate, dividing the sphere of inner heavens from the earthly sky below*, has been adapted to Israelite imagery and thought (Ezek 1:22-24,26):

> "22 And a likeness (was) above the heads of the living creatures, a firmament (*rāqîaᶜ*), like the splendour of the terrifying ice / crystal, spread out from above their heads. 23 And under the firmament (*rāqîaᶜ*) were their wings, stretched out straight, one towards another; and each had two wings covering these, and each two (wings) covering those, their bodies. 24 And I heard the sound of their wings like the sound of many waters, like the voice of Shadday, as they went, a sound of tumult like the sound of a camp / host. [...] 26 And from above the firmament (*rāqîaᶜ*), which was above their heads, (it was) like an appearance like sapphire stone / lapis lazuli, the likeness of a throne; and upon the likeness of the throne was a likeness of an appearance of a man upon it, from above."

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86 This was, of course, the inspiration for the later concept of the heavenly throne in Rev 4:6-8 as well as for the symbols of the four evangelists in Christian iconography.

87 Keel, Jahwe-Visionen 125-273; Keel, Herrlichkeitserscheinung 143-150.

88 See Keel, Herrlichkeitserscheinung 145; cf. further Uehlinger / Müller Trufaut, Ezekiel.

89 See Green, Mischwesen 249-250; Black / Green, Gods 48-49.

In an article on the evolution of the concepts of heaven in the Hebrew Bible I followed this trace at some length.[90] It is, thus, likely that the image of a sanctuary of YHWH above the firmament derived from a Mesopotamian cosmology similar to the one noted in a Neo-Assyrian cultic commentary dating to the 1st millenium BCE (KAR 307 [VAT 8917], line 30-33):[91]

> "30 The Upper Heavens are *luludānītu*-stone. They belong to Anu. He settled the 300 Igigi inside. 31 The Middle Heavens are *saggilmud*-stone. They belong to the Igigi. Bel sat on the high dais inside, 32 in the lapis lazuli sanctuary. He made a lamp of electrum (*elmēšu*) shine inside. 33 The Lower Heavens are jasper. They belong to the stars. He drew the constellations of the gods on them."

In this text there is the concept of three superimposed levels of the heaven, each divided from the others by a plate consisting of different stones / crystals. Interestingly enough the plate in the middle (supporting the throne) is made of a stone (*saggilmud*) which according to other references is equated with lapis lazuli and, therefore, of blue color.[92] The lowest of the plates is made of a translucent stone (*jasper*) making it possible to look through it to the next level. In Ezek 1:22 the appearance of the only plate mentioned here (*rāqîᵃᶜ*, cf. Gen 1:6-8; Ps 150:1 etc.) is similar to ice / crystal and, therefore, transparent, too. Above it, in Ezek 1:26 (cf. Ezek 10:1), there is *a throne made of sapphire / lapis lazuli* with the human-shaped figure of YHWH's glory upon it – an obvious parallel to the enthroned god Marduk (= Bel in KAR 307:31) who sits "in a lapis lazuli sanctuary"[93] (line 32; cf. Exod 24:9-11[94]).

In the judgement over Jerusalem and Judah, depicted in the vision Ezek 8-11, chapter 10 begins again with a visionary insight into the heavenly abode with the throne of YHWH, from which he gives the final order to burn and devastate the city, while the prophet sees simultaneously how God's glory abandons the temple (Ezek 10:1-4):

> "1 And I saw, and behold, upon the firmament (*rāqîᵃᶜ*), which was above the heads of the Cherubim, (it was) like sapphire stone / lapis lazuli, like an

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90 Hartenstein, Wolkendunkel, especially 136-152.

91 See the detailed commentary on KAR 307 by Horowitz, Geography 3-19 (from which the translation above is taken [op. cit. 4]); cf. further Livingstone, Works 82-91.

92 See Horowitz, Geography 9-11.

93 Even the yellow shining material *elmēšu*, "electrum", from the Akkadian text (line 32) has its counterpart in the vision in the Hebrew word *ḥašmal* (Ezek 1:27; cf. Ezek 1:4; 8:2; see Ges¹⁸ Lieferung 2 408-409).

94 Exod 24:9-11, which very likely belongs to the approximately same date as the Ezekiel-references, is an independent example of the transformation of the Mesopotamian cosmological image of a heavenly abode made of sapphire / lapis lazuli; see Hartenstein, Wolkendunkel 136-152.

appearance of a likeness of a throne, appearing above them. 2 And he spoke to the man clothed in linen, and he said, 'Go in between the wheels, under the cherub, and fill your hands with coals of fire from between the Cherubim, and scatter them over the city'. And he went in before my eyes. 3 And the Cherubim were standing on the south side of the house, when the man went in; and the cloud filled (verb *mālēʾ*) the inner court. 4 And the glory (*kāḇôḏ*) of YHWH lifted himself from upon the Cherubim to the (inner) threshold of the house; and the house was filled (verb *mālēʾ*) with the cloud, and the court was full (verb *mālēʾ*) of the splendour of the glory (*kāḇôḏ*) of YHWH."

Note that the Cherubim, here situated in the temple-room, are related to the fire and the coals which are to be scattered over the city (this may be compared with the coals in Isa 6:6-7 and the above mentioned interpretation of the function of the Seraphim in Isa 6:2-4 as symbols of judgement as well). As mentioned above, we find here again also the concept *of the (temple-)house "filled"* (verb *mālēʾ*) *with darkness* (in Ezek 10:4: the cloud, in Isa 6:4: the smoke) at the very moment the glory (*kāḇôḏ*) leaves it's place above the Cherubim directed towards the outside of the sanctuary (cf. Ezek 11:23 where the glory leaves the city departing to the east). The same is true with Ezek 43:4-5 where the return of the glory (*kāḇôḏ*) must be understood as *the end of the hiding of the presence of YHWH* and – implicitly – as the *renewal of his splendour and brightness in the land*:[95]

"4 And the glory (*kāḇôḏ*) of YHWH had entered the house by the way of the gate whose direction is facing east. 5 And the wind / spirit lifted me up, and brought me into the inner court; and, behold, the glory (*kāḇôḏ*) of YHWH had filled (verb *mālēʾ*) the house."

Thus, the form and function of the porters of the throne (of the glory) in the visions of Ezekiel is closely related to the explicit concept of a heavenly abode of YHWH. This concept in Ezek 1-3; 8-11 (together with Ezek 43:4-5) shows that the God of the whole earth even can gather himself in hiding, leaving temple and land abandoned, while at the same time he opens the heavens to show his prophet the further things to come. The Cherubim in the Ezekiel-visions, then, are the attendants of YHWH wherever and whenever he acts from his cosmic abode, transcending widely all human boundaries. This, above all, – together with

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95   Cf. also Isa 60:2 which seems to be a somewhat similar realization of the concept (see Hartenstein, Unzugänglichkeit 143 note 452). The "Return of YHWH" as a central motif of exilic / post-exilic prophecy (especially in Isa 40:1-11; 52:7-10) has now been thoroughly examined by Ehring, Rückkehr (with extensive comparison to Ancient Near Eastern texts).

the chariot-like features added to the throne-sphere in Ezek 1; 10[96] – was the starting-point for later Jewish speculations on the Merkabah, the heavenly chariot throne.
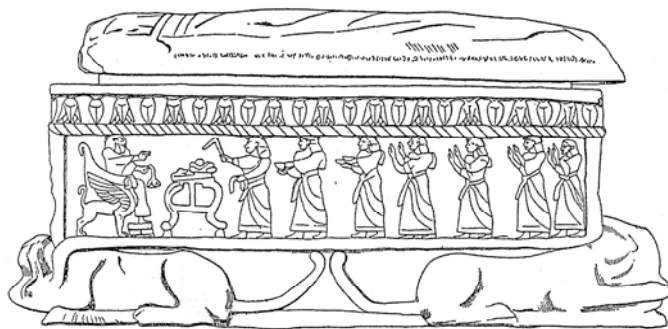
Attachment: List of Figures

Fig. 1 Sarcophagus of Ahirom, limestone, Byblos, 1250-1150 BCE. The king seated on a sphinx throne with attendants (funeral meal?). *Source*: Frankfort, H., The Art and Architecture of the Ancient Orient (The Pelican History of Art), Harmondsworth ⁴1969, 160 Fig. 76.

Fig. 2 Carved Ivory Inlay, Megiddo, 1250-1150 BCE. The king seated on a sphinx throne and riding on a chariot. *Source*: Frankfort, H., The Art and Architecture of the Ancient Orient (The Pelican History of Art), Harmondsworth ⁴1969, 159 Fig. 75.

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96 See for the appearance of the wheels in Ezek 1:15-16; 10:9-10, Keel, Jahwe-Visionen 263-269. In Ezek 10 the wheels of the throne were depicted as somewhat independent beings with wings, faces etc. The passages about the wheels in Ezek 1 and 10 seem to be supplementary to the original text, while their interdependence is a matter of debate (cf. Zimmerli, Ezechiel I 28-29). In any case they were the source for their later personification as angels beside Cherubim and Seraphim in Jewish writings, then called "ophannim" (cf. the above cited passage from 1En 71:1), from the Hebrew word ʾōp̄ān, "wheel" (cf. Ezek 1:15-21; 10:9-13,16-17).

Fig. 3 Stele, limestone, Sousse / Hadrametum, sanctuary Level II, second half of the 5th century BCE. Male bearded god (Melqart?) with attendant, under a canopy. *Source*: Moscati, S., Die Phöniker. Von 1200 vor Christus bis zum Untergang Karthagos (Kindlers Kulturgeschichte), Zürich 1966, 487 Fig. XXXV.

Fig. 4 Carved Ivory Inlay, Samaria, Iron Age II B (9th-8th century BCE). A Sshinx in front of the stylized holy tree. *Source*: Keel, O. / Uehlinger, C., Göttinnen, Götter und Gottessymbole. Neue Erkenntnisse zur Religionsgeschichte Kanaans und Israels aufgrund bislang unerschlossener ikonographischer Quellen (QD 134), Freiburg / Basel / Wien ⁵2001, 267 Fig. 232b.

Fig. 5a-b Throne, limestone, Lebanon, Southern Coast, 7th century BCE. Between the two Sshinxes on the front of the seat the stylized holy tree, on the seat a betyl / stele. *Source*: Metzger, M., Jahwe, der Kerubenthroner, die von Keruben flankierte Palmette und Sphingenthrone aus dem Libanon, in: Metzger, M., Vorderorientalische Ikonographie und Altes Testament. Gesammelte Aufsätze (Jerusalemer Theologisches Forum 6), Münster 2004, 210 Fig. 157.

Fig. 6a Seal, red jasper, Iron Age II B (8th-7th century BCE). Four-winged uraeus. The name of the owner seems to be Judahite (*lyḥmlyḥw*). *Source*: Keel, O., Jahwe-Visionen und Siegelkunst. Eine neue Deutung der Majestätsschilderungen in Jes 6, Ez 1 und 10 und Sach 4 (SBS 84/85), Stuttgart 1977, 109 Fig. 88.

Fig 6b Seal, lapis-lazuli, Megiddo, Iron Age II B (8th century BCE). Upper register: A pair of two-winged horned uraei facing one another (above the name of the owner: *ʾlʾmr*). Lower register: A lying sphinx. *Source*: Keel, O., Jahwe-Visionen und Siegelkunst. Eine neue Deutung der Majestätsschilderungen in Jes 6, Ez 1 und 10 und Sach 4 (SBS 84/85), Stuttgart 1977, 102 Fig. 84.

Fig. 7 Seal, Palestine, Iron Age II B (8th-7th century BCE). Symmetric composition: Under a broad winged sun-disc the stylized holy tree flanked by griffins and sphinxes. Below a horus falcon between two uraei. *Source*: Keel, O., Die Herrlichkeitserscheinung des Königsgottes in der Prophetie, in: Irsigler, H. (ed.), Mythisches in biblischer Bildsprache. Gestalt und Verwandlung in Prophetie und Psalmen (QD 209), Freiburg / Basel / Wien 2004, 161 Fig. 8.

Fig. 8 Naiskos, Ramleh-limestone, vicinity of Sidon, second quarter of the 1st millenium (7th-6th century BCE?). Sphinx-throne in a rectangular framework decorated with rows of palmettes. The horizontal beam

above the niche features a row of reversed lotus flowers and buds. Above a corniche with a winged sun-disc flanked by uraei. On the top a frieze of eight horizontally arranged uraei. *Source*: Nunn, A., Der figürliche Motivschatz Phöniziens, Syriens und Transjordaniens vom 6. bis zum 4. Jahrhundert v. Chr. (OBO. Series Archaeologica 18), Freiburg, Schweiz / Göttingen 2000, Plate 2 Fig. 7.

Fig. 9 Cylinder Seal, modelled style, Neo-Assyrian, about 700 BCE. The anthropomorphic sun-god Shamash on a horse (on his way over the heaven). Simultaneously the upper parts of Shamash are depicted as the winged sun disc above the firmament. The plate of the heaven is supported by two bull-men (*kusarikku*). Above the plate on the left the star of Ishtar, on the right the crescent of the moon (Sîn). On the left and the right of the scene a fish-garbed and a human figure. *Source*: Black, J., Green, A., Gods, Demons and Symbols of Ancient Mesopotamia, London 1992, 103 Fig. 82.

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God's Interpreter

The Interpreting Angel in Post-Exilic Prophetic Visions of the Old Testament

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1. Introduction

Some books of the Latter or Writing Prophets include vision reports which form a genre of its own in prophetic literature. In these a prophet is privileged to gain special insight into the divine sphere. Either is he allowed to catch a glimpse of God himself, or he sees something which foreshadows events that are about to happen in the human world and which may be represented in a metaphorical or symbolic way. Obviously it is no problem for an OT prophet to recognize a vision of God and his immediate environment – as in Am 7:7f.; Isa 6; Ezek 1 and 10. If the vision has a metaphorical quality there is often, though not always[1], a comment or explanation, i.e. an audition accompanying or following the vision as such. God himself provides the interpretation – as in Am 7:7f.; 8:1f.; Jer 1:11f., 13f.; 24:1-10[2]. Now, there are a few instances of visions where the prophet sees enigmatic things or beings that needs must be explained to him (and his recipients). Without any help the prophet could make absolutely nothing of it. However, help is not provided by YHWH himself, but by an interpreter belonging to the divine sphere, by an angel. This phenomenon occurs in Zechariah's night visions (Zech 1-6) and in Daniel's visions (Dan 7-12), accounts of visions that are undoubtedly of post-exilic origin. As critics often also include Ezek 40-48 in their investigation of the *angelus interpres* in OT prophecy, we will consider the "man" in this vision as well, at least briefly.

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1   In Am 7:1-3; 4-6 it is evident for Amos that the locusts and the fire are omens of judgement.
2   These follow the pattern: God asks the prophet what he sees, the prophet answers describing the vision, God explains what it means in terms of his future plans.

2. Zechariah's Night Visions (Zech 1:7-6:8*)

Recent investigations and commentaries agree almost unanimously that there is an original cycle of seven visions in Zech 1-6[3] which has been composed deliberately as a literary unit using a concentric structure[4]. Thus this cycle is interpreted as a literary product, not in terms of a report of an authentic visionary experience[5]. The cycle has been expanded by the later insertion of an eighth vision (3:1-7, with an explication in 3:8-10) different in nature as compared with the original ones, and further additional material (4:6b-10a; 1:16f.; 2:10-17; 6:9-15)[6]. A redactor clearly marks the opening of the night visions by the date in 1:7 (February 15, 519 BCE); in 7:1 we find another date (December 7, 518 BCE) as heading of a complex of oracles so that the cycle of visions has come to an end here.

The composition of the seven visions follows both the principle of a stereotyped pattern and of slight variation. The basic constellation is the visionary and first person narrator Zechariah communicating to the reader what he experienced during the night (הלילה 1:8). The present text giving the dates in 1:7 and 7:1 suggests that Zechariah witnessed all seven visions during one single night. The setting at night as well as the remark in 4:1 (the angel waking him) associate that the experience resembles a dream[7]. So it is a surrealistic world that Zechariah is privileged to enter. No wonder there are beings in it whom one does not meet everyday. The most prominent is a figure called המלאך הדבר בי "the messenger / angel who spoke with me"[8]. The dialogue between the visionary and this special angel accompanies the sequence of visions as a running commentary. For the most part the angel explains the strange sights to Zechariah, and thereby at the same time to the reader. The Book of Zechariah is the first writing in the OT that clearly presents an angel (even using the term מלאך) functioning as an interpreter.

How is the interpreting angel introduced? To answer this question we have to consider the first vision more closely. After the date given in 1:7 which characterizes the following section as YHWH's word hap-

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3 Zech 1:7-15; 2:1-4; 2:5-9; 4:1-6a,10b-14; 5:1-4; 5:5-11; 6:1-8. Cf. e.g. Gese, Anfang 25; Seybold, Bilder 11-23; Behrens, Visionsschilderungen.

4 Cf. e.g. Seybold, Bilder 35; Reventlow, Propheten 39f.; Hanhart, Sacharja 51; Behrens, Visionsschilderungen 274.

5 Cf. e.g. Gese, Anfang 36-38; Seybold, Bilder 31-39.

6 Cf. most recently Behrens, Visionsschilderungen 273f.

7 North, Prophecy 48: "Characteristic of dream however is the combination of images never experienced together in real life."

8 Zech 1:9, 13, 14; 2:2, 7; 4:1, 4, 5; 5:5, 10; 6:4.

pening to the prophet Zechariah, the point of view switches from the third person to the first person narrative, namely Zechariah's perspective. YHWH's word actually consisted in a number of visions the prophet is now recapitulating (ראיתי, 1:8). The presentative particle הנה indicates the beginning of the description of what Zechariah perceived in this extraordinary state of mind, namely a man riding on a reddish horse and halting between two myrtle trees in the glen. There are more horses of differing colours behind him (1:8). Zechariah sees and describes, but he does not understand whom he sees and what the sight means. That is why he asks "What are they?" (1:9a) adding an address, אדני "my lord", implying that there is someone present to answer him. Theoretically speaking there are several possibilities as to whom the prophet directs his words: (1) Zechariah is addressing God as he is aware of the extraordinary character of the experience. This would fit in with the theological usage of the word אדני referring to God (cf. Isa 6:8), especially as an address (Cf. Isa 6:11; Ezek 9:8; 11:13)[9]. One might imagine that God reacts to the question by sending the interpreting angel who is there out of a sudden to talk to Zechariah. (2) Zechariah addresses the man on horseback, i.e. an element of the vision. As there is a human figure in the vision Zechariah may expect that the man is able to talk him and to introduce himself[10]. And indeed, 1:10 has the rider answer (cf. 1:10a introducing the speech)[11]. (3) Zechariah addresses the interpreting angel (as in 4:4, 5, 13; 6:4). Then it would be taken for granted that he has emerged at the same time as the vision or even from the vision. Anyway, the *angelus interpres* is not explicitly introduced, just characterized by the phrase המלאך הדבר בי here and throughout the visions.

The angel who is talking to Zechariah is an intermediary figure. He belongs to the divine sphere. Therefore, he is representing YHWH אדני as interpreter of the vision. In this sense the angel is not a part of the vision, but an observer like Zechariah, though an observer initiated into the secret visionary world. At the same time the interpreting angel seems to have the opportunity also to cross the line and to exert influence on or to enter the visualized sphere. Hence his announcement, "I'll let you see what these are" (1:9bβ), may be understood as prompting the man's answer (1:10, and also 1:11b). In 5:8 he will thrust the woman

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9   In Ezek אדני is combined with YHWH as it is the rule within the book. Hanhart, Sacharja 80, mentions the fact that the word is used as an address to angels in Gen 18:3 and 19:18.

10   Cf. Zech 2:5-6 as an equivalent of this option.

11   However, BHS suggests that "the man standing between the myrtle trees" is an addition.

symbolizing wickedness back into the barrel and slam the lid shut before two winged women appear and carry the barrel off. In 6:7b he will order the horses to patrol the world.

In fact, the passage Zech 1:8-15 as it now stands is rather confusing for the reader[12]. The terms אִישׁ, מַלְאַךְ־יהוה, and מַלְאָךְ all refer to an angelic being – traditionally angels in the OT are sometimes just called אֲנָשִׁים, and it is only through their behaviour and their special capabilities that one can guess at their divine nature. The problem in Zech 1 is that on the one hand it seems clear that there are two different angelic beings present here – the man on horseback as an emissary seeking information about the world, and the angel talking to the visionary[13]. On the other hand the contours of the two are strangely blurred. This fact underlines the extraordinary quality of Zechariah's visionary experience, its dream-like, even surrealistic touch. Obviously, redactional activities tried to make the identity of the two heavenly beings clearer, especially by introducing the term מַלְאַךְ־יהוה which might refer to both[14].

When one tries to interpret the text as it now stands it might read as follows: The interpreting angel reacts to Zechariah's question (1:9) and prompts the speech of the man who explains that they, i.e. the horses, have been sent to patrol the world[15] (1:10). Then these emissaries[16] give their report (1:11aβb). It is addressed to "YHWH's angel halting be

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12 This is why parts of the text have been eliminated or emended, cf. BHS and commentaries.

13 According to Seybold, Bilder 53 note 13, there is no need to change MT, except for the apposition in 1:11aβ. To him there are four different persons: the interpreting angel (1:9), the commander of the riders that is the man between the myrtle trees (1:8, 10); the squad of riders (1:11) and YHWH's messenger answering the riders and pronouncing the lament (1:12).
    To Reventlow, Propheten 41, all three terms designate only one and the same being, the change is just due to stylistic reasons (one wonders, however, what these might be). Therefore he takes the intermediary angel as a figure within the vision, not as an interpreter detached from it. An important point for him is the fact that the angel may interfere with the visionary events (2:7; 5:8; 6:3b). But of course, this need not mean that the angel is part of the vision; as he is a divine agent he is free to act on different levels. Cf. Hanhart, Sacharja 76-80: The interpreting angel is identified with the man on horseback, i.e. e is part of the vision tableau which he explains at the same time. He is the only one talking besides Zechariah so that there are only two of them: the prophet and the angel.

14 If it refers to the interpreting angel one has to eliminate at least "standing between the myrtle trees" in 1:11a.

15 Note that the phrase הלך hitp. + בארץ will be repeated in 6:7. It also describes the activity of the satan in Job 1:7 and 2:2, i.e. of a celestial being. Cf. Hanhart, Sacharja 71, and Delkurt, Nachtgesichte 49f.

16 Most readers take it for granted that there are riders on all the horses. The text does not say so, however. As these horses are celestial ones they might as well be celestial beings able to speak.

tween the myrtle trees" (1:11aα). This remark identifies the "man" (1:8) with YHWH's angel[17]. Considering the apparent biblical tradition which calls an angel both "man" and (later) YHWH's messenger / angel (e.g. Gen 19) it seems probable that a redactor wanted to make clear that the man on horseback is also an angel, one active within the world as a commander of the squad of emissaries. When he has heard the report that everything is calm he reacts to this message by addressing God and pronouncing a lament (1:12)[18]. This prompts YHWH's comforting[19] answer which he gives to the interpreting angel (1:13). Obviously, Zechariah perceives that God is saying something, but he cannot understand the words[20]. Therefore, the angel tells him God's words (1:14a) and quotes them (1:14b, 15). He also orders Zechariah to make these words known (קרא)[21]. So, the structure is rather complicated which is possibly due to the genesis of the passage. Trying to reconstruct an original version would be highly speculative, though. The present text illustrates that Zechariah enters an alien world inhabited by angelic beings with different functions. But note that the crucial message of the passage is given in god's final speech – the visionary elements only gradually lead to this climax[22]. The visionary elements create a certain atmosphere, but they do not contain or transport the important message as such.

The following six visions[23] of the original cycle are less complicated with regard to the interpreting angel: each vision begins with the remark that the first person narrator looks up[24] and sees something. The

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17 Cf. Jeremias, Nachtgesichte 85.
18 Most critics (with the exception of Seybold, Bilder 53 note 13, and Delkurt, Nachtgesichte 65) rather have the interpreting angel utter the lament because this fits in with their concept of the intermediary addressing God and transmitting God's word.
    The lament may be representative of the feelings of Zechariah and his contemporary readers.
19 Note that the Masoretic accents attribute comforting words to YHWH and good words to the angel.
20 Cf. Behrens, Visionsschilderungen 282.
21 This made commentators think that the passage is a call narrative, cf. e.g. Delkurt, Nachtgesichte 72f.
22 Cf. Delkurt, Nachtgesichte 84. As Hanhart, Sacharja 133, has it, the interpretation dominates the imagery.
23 The fact that the interpreting angel is missing in 3:1-7 is an important aspect indicating that this (eighth) vision was inserted later. Cf. e.g. Seybold, Bilder 17; Behrens, Visionsschilderungen 302f.
    In 3:1-7 we find YHWH's angel confronting the satan. The two opponents are both acting within the vision and do not have any contact with the visionary.
24 As a rule it says עיני וארא (את) נשׂא (2:1, 5); in 5:1 and 6:1 there is a variation by saying that he did this once again (שׁוב); in 5:5 the interpreting angel orders him to look up and see. As there are two stages within the visions in 2:1-4 and 5:5-11, the phrase is

description of the visualized begins with the presentative particle הנה[25]. The visionary then asks the interpreting angel, whom he keeps addressing as אדני [26], what it is he is witnessing (מה־אלה[27]), and the angel answers explaining the vision (2:5-9 is the only exception). As a rule he does so with his own words, except in 1:8-15 where he makes the characters in the vision talk and later on when he quotes God's word. In 2:8b, 9 and 5:4 he again quotes YHWH.

There are only two more instances where conditions are not quite clear at first glance. In the third vision (2:5-9) Zechariah sees a man with a measuring line in his hand (2:5). When Zechariah asks him directly[28] where he is going, the man answers (not the interpreting angel): He is about to measure the area of Jerusalem. Especially when bearing in mind the date given in 1:7, this associates preparations for rebuilding the city. Only then the interpreting angel emerges again[29]. Another angel comes forth to encounter him, i.e. the interpreting angel (2:7) and he, that is the interpreting angel[30], tells him to run and address "the young man over there" with quoting God's promise that there will be no need of erecting new city walls as God himself will be a wall of fire protecting Jerusalem. Now, who is the "young man"? Is it (a) the man with the measuring line, or (b) Zechariah? If it is (a) the man who is about to measure, the second angel's message would imply that the man's activity was intended to prepare the (re-)erection of Jerusalem's city walls[31]. The second angel then has to revoke the man's commission

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repeated in 5:9; 2:3 is an exception to the rule as it says "YHWH made me see", the only instance where an activity is attributed to God himself. The phrase is missing only in 4:1, i.e. within the central vision which is instead emphasized by the angel's initiative: He wakes Zechariah and asks him what he sees (4:1-2a).

25   Cf. 1:8; 2:1, 5 (7); 4:2; 5:1, 7, 9; 6:1. It is missing only in the second part of 2:1-4, namely in 2:3f.

26   Cf. 4:4, 5, 13; 6:4. Cf. Jeremias, Nachtgesichte 101f.

27   1:9; 2:2, 4; 4:4, 11, 12; 5:6; 6:4. Again, there are exceptions: in 2:6 he asks the man in the vision where he is about to go, and twice the angel asks Zechariah what he sees (4:"; 5:2).

28   Gese, Anfang 27 note 35, wants to change the text so that the question is addressed to the interpreting angel who will answer it.

29   יצא, LXX reads ειστηκει which would be an equivalent to עמד. Is יצא due to an *aberration oculi* then?

30   Almost unanimously scholars think that the interpreting angel gives the second angel the order to run to the man with the measuring line, cf. Gese, Anfang 28 note 36; Reventlow, Propheten 47; Hanhart, Sacharja 141; Vincent, Herrlichkeit, 104; Delkurt, Nachtgesichte 112. Cf. also Love, Text 58ff, discussing the problem of identifying speakers in Zech 1-8.

31   The text, however, does not say anything explicitly here about the city walls. Most critics (except Vincent, Herrlichkeit 114, and Delkurt, Nachtgesichte 112ff.) take this for granted because of God's promise to be a wall of fire.

as Jerusalem will not need any fortifications[32]. It might also be (b) Zechariah[33] who gets additional information, namely that the measuring activity is not a preparation for rebuilding defensive walls, but to measure the enlarged extension of the city. The vision's climax[34] then would be God's promise to protect Jerusalem – rebuilt and abounding in human and animal residents.

The third and last instance is found in the end of the last vision (6:8). After explaining the last vision of the four chariots and sending them to patrol the world, the interpreting angel cries out to the visionary saying: "Those going in northern direction let *my* spirit rest in the northern country". As רוח belongs to God himself, this statement of the angel appears to be God's own word because of the first person singular suffix[35]. So at the end of the visionary cycle or the dream sequence, the interpreting angel becomes so to speak transparent: he is at least God's mouthpiece, if not God himself. This blurring happens only when the visionary experience comes to an end.

The strange things Zechariah sees in this sequence of visions turn out to be highly metaphorical illustrations that need explanation. The interpreting angel functioning as God's representative provides the visionary with these explanations. This is his primary function. In addition, he directs the prophet's attention, and he sometimes interferes with the scenes visualized so that the line between an observing level and external point of view framing the observed metaphorical scenery is sometimes blurred, especially so in the beginning (1:8-15) and in the end (6:8) – and maybe in the third vision. The fact that the angel also performs actions implies that he is not only a voice, but a visible person as well.

The Book of Zechariah is the first OT writing to introduce an interpreting angel (quite officially using the term מלאך), so that he is clearly a post-exilic phenomenon. Often critics refer to Ezek 40-48 as the origin of the *angelus interpres*[36]. So we will consider this next.

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32   Thus e.g. Stendebach, Prophetie 28; Tigchelaar, Prophets 65, thinks that the surveying angel represents the exiles.
33   Is נער, then, a kind of technical term for the prophet alluding to Jer 1:6) viz. for the elected like Salomo? For this cf. Delkurt, Nachtgesichte 114-116.
34   For the possibility that the second part of the vision (2:5-6) is to surpass the first (2:7-9) cf. Vincent, Herrlichkeit 120, and Delkurt, Nachtgesichte.
35   Again, there have been emendations of the text: רוח יהוה (BHS).
36   Jeremias, Nachtgesichte 90, 100. North, Prophecy 67: "a place cannot be assigned definitely to Zechariah without fully taking issue on where Ezekiel stands."

3. The Man with the Measuring Line in Ezekiel's Final Vision (Ezek 40-48)

The last chapters of the Book of Ezekiel (40-48) describe Ezekiel's final vision of future salvation: In a rapture he sees a new Temple and learns about the new organisation of Israel. The introductory passage (40:1-4) resembles the opening lines of Ezekiel's former vision reports (1-3; 8-11) which indicates the redactional intention to link these three visions, namely: the vision of God including Ezekiel's call, the vision of judgement, and the vision of salvation. For a start there is a date (cf. 1:1f.; 8:1), here it is the last and latest one in the book, the year being doubly defined as the 25th year after the first deportation and the 14th year after Jerusalem's destruction (40:1a). The formula designating the beginning of an extraordinary experience follows: YHWH's hand takes hold of Ezekiel and carries him off (40:1b; cf. 1:3; 8:1 and also 37:1). The phrase במראת אלהים emphasizes the visionary character of the experience (40:2aα, cf. 1:1bβ; 8:3bα). Ezekiel is taken to a very high mountain in the land of Israel; on its southern slope he discerns something like a city – this is, of course, Mount Zion and the new Temple of Jerusalem[37]. So God himself has transported Ezekiel (40:3a), but then Ezekiel perceives a man looking like copper. He has a linen measuring line and a measuring rod in his hand (40:3aβ). And he addresses Ezekiel in the same way God so far used to do (בן־אדם), commanding him to pay attention to everything he will show him in order to tell it to the Israelites later on (40:4). This "man" is characterized as a supernatural being by the metallic radiance[38]. One remembers the man in Ezek 8:2 who was described even more in terms of God himself (cf. Ezek 1:26b, 27a). In the present text of the book, the man in 8:2 seems to participate in transporting Ezekiel. The man in 40:3 has got some equipment, a trait which recalls the seven men in Ezek 9:1-10:7*. The measuring instruments point to his main activity, the measuring of the Temple area and building (Ezek 40-42)[39]. At the same time he functions as Ezekiel's guide[40] taking him along within the Temple area so that Ezekiel witnesses his measuring activity. As compared to the measuring and guiding he does

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37 Cf. Ezekiel's transportation to Jerusalem in 8:3. Here he is carried to the mythological mountain of God (Zimmerli, Ezechiel 997), it is a "theological geography" (Allen, Ezekiel 229, referring to Isa 2:2).

38 Cf. the beings carrying God's throne in 1:7.

39 Cf. the 19 occurrences of the "measurement formula" (Allen, Ezekiel 228): Ezek 40:6, 8, 11, 13, 19, 23, 24, 27, 28, 32, 47, 48; 41:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 13, 15.

40 Cf. the "guidance formulas" (Allen, Ezekiel 228) Ezek 40:17, 24, 28, 32, 35, 48; 41:1; 42:1.

not talk much, giving only very few explanations to Ezekiel[41]. The focus is obviously on *visualizing* the Temple area. It has been noticed time and again that Ezek 40-42 offers an architectural ground plan[42]. Thus the role of the man measuring is primarily to dramatize the description which was also stylized as a "guidance report"[43].

Apart from Ezek 40-42 the man appears in 43:6b where he stands silently beside Ezekiel while God's glory is addressing the prophet. The insertion in 43:6b wants to indicate that the man and God are not identical. After this the man retires to the background. Next time we hear of him is in Ezek 47:1-12 in the account of the stream of water flowing from the Temple and affecting the land in a miraculous way. 47:3-7* again present the man as he is using his measuring line to measure distances of 1000 cubits (47:3-5). He does so four times and at each point he makes Ezekiel experience the depth of the water which is increasing rapidly, thus illustrating the abundance of water and blessing. This physical involvement of the prophet in the vision surpasses Ezekiel's former participation as he becomes comparatively active.

The man, whom we might call an angel because he is clearly a supernatural being, serves as Ezekiel's guide, and, as Ezekiel observes him measuring, helps the prophet to come to know the exact measures for a detailed description of the Temple's ground plan. He is not so much an interpreter then, but rather a guide. In spite of this, critics of Zech 1-6 have taken this man in Ezek 40-48 as the predecessor of Zechariah's interpreting angel; in addition, commentators unanimously point to Ez 40-48 as a model when they discuss Zechariah's third vision (Zech 2:5-9)[44]. Is this solution probable?

The answer depends on how one thinks about the genesis of Ezek 40-48. Zimmerli's commentary may serve as an example for the more traditional view which takes the man as guide and measuring surveyor to be part of the original layer of Ezek 40-42[45] which he attributed to Ezekiel himself. Some decades before Hölscher[46] had argued that, al-

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41   Ezek 40:45f.; 41:4, 22; 42:13. These are even superfluous; they are obviously intended to point out parts of the Temple that are considered most important and holy. Probably they are supplementary comments.

42   This made Cooke, Book 425, think that Ezekiel was in fact brooding on a plan which prompted his ecstatic experience. Allen, Ezekiel 228, says that the account is dependent on a ground-plan. There are only two vertical elements mentioned (Ezek 40:6 [steps]; 41:6-8 [storeys]). As Zimmerli, Ezechiel 992, remarks, we do not learn anything about materials.

43   Cf. Fuhs, Ezechiel 227f.; cf. also Vogt, Untersuchungen 137.

44   Cf. e.g. Hanhart, Sacharja 124-127; Delkurt, Nachtgesichte 106-112.

45   Zimmerli, Ezechiel 979, takes 40:1-37, 47-49 and 41:1-4 as the original text.

46   Hesekiel 189-212.

though Ezek 40-42 form the basis of the final vision, Ezekiel cannot be the author of it because the prophet is taken around by God himself in the authentic vision in Ezek 8-9. More recent criticism has shown that the man was not included in the basic layer of Ezek 40-48, but is a later addition. As E. Vogt demonstrated, the original text of the final vision only comprised Ezek 40:1-2 (the transportation), 43:4-6a, 7 (the return of God's glory), and 47:1-12* (the spring in the Temple)[47]. Ez 40:3-4 functions as an introduction to the detailed description of the Temple[48]. T.A. Rudnig[49] presented a slightly modified hypothesis, but he in principle agrees that the passages mentioning the man equipped with the measuring instruments[50] are late additions which he calls the "Mann-Bearbeitung"; according to him they originate from the third century BCE[51].

If this analysis is correct, then Zech 1-6 cannot depend on Ezek 40-48 – at least insofar as the interpreting angel is concerned. The man measuring the Temple area in Ezekiel's vision is just a literary means to dramatize the description of the Temple's ground plan. As he is a supernatural being, one may call him an angel. For the visionary, however, he is a guide, not an interpreter. Considering Zechariah's night visions the man in Ezekiel is not a model for the interpreting angel; instead, he reminds of the man with the measuring line who is ready to measure the expansion of future Jerusalem (Zech 2:5-6). So Ezekiel's man may be inspired by Zechariah's third vision.

4. Angelic Interpreters in Dan 7-12

A collection of visions makes up the second half of the Book of Daniel. As R.G. Kratz has recently shown[52] they are literary compositions intended to interpret the historical situation of their authors viz. redactors from the 160ies BCE onwards. Since the composition of Zechariah's night visions (and the insertion of the "man" in Ezekiel's final vision) some time – maybe centuries – has passed. This interval is felt also with regard to the phenomenon of the interpreting angel, who is needed more than ever because the imagery employed in the visions has be-

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47 Cf. Vogt, Untersuchungen 127-175. This analysis was adopted by Fuhs, Ezechiel.
48 According to Fuhs, Ezechiel 227, 40:3-4 was inspired by 8:2-3 and introduces the original layer of the detailed description (40:6-37, 47-49; 41:1-8, 9-15a; 42:15-18).
49 Cf. Heilig, and more recently, Ezechiel 40-48 527-630.
50 Namely, 40:3(f.*); 42: 15-20*; 43:6b; 47:3-7* and the measurement formulas in 40-41.
51 Cf. Ezechiel 40-48 538; the same is true for 8:2-3a.
52 Cf. Kratz, Visionen, cf. the English version Visions.

come more bizarre. As above, we will concentrate on the supernatural interpreters – in the order of their appearance in the book.

The first vision report shares several characteristics particularly with Zechariah's night visions. The Aramaic vision in Dan 7 first gives a date and explicitly says in third person narrative that the vision happened at night: It was a dream Daniel had in his bed (7:1). With 7:2 the point of view switches to first person narrative, and Daniel himself says that he had the vision at night. After describing the vision (7:2b-15) Daniel remembers his reaction: He felt shocked and scared, obviously because he did not understand what he had seen. Therefore, he approaches someone belonging to the supernatural personnel who is part of the vision and asks him to interpret it which he does willingly (7:16)[53]. The person addressed is not identified precisely. Probably he is one of those worshiping the very old one on the throne (7:9-10), that is to say a member of the divine assembly. When the interpretation is finished Daniel tells the reader again his own reaction (7:28).

Another date (8:1) opens the first of the sequence of Hebrew visions (8-12). The vision proper begins like Zechariah's night visions with the phrase נשׂא עיני plus אראה and the presentative הנה (8:3). Again, after the description (8:3b-13) Daniel feels at a loss because he does not know what to make of the vision (8.15a)[54]. Daniel's wish to understand seems to make an interpreter emerge: out of a sudden someone looking like a (strong, young) man (גבר)[55] stands before him (8:15b), and he hears a human voice (which turns out to be God's, though) that addresses the man with his name Gabriel, and orders him to interpret the vision for Daniel (8:16). Gabriel obeys, but before he can do so there is an additional scene (8:17-18): As Gabriel approaches Daniel gets frightened and falls prostrate. This incident recalls Ezekiel's reaction to the vision of God (Ezek 1:28b), so that here God's messenger / angel is depicted as YHWH's equivalent by the allusion. Gabriel's addressing Daniel as "mortal" (בן־אדם) quotes God addressing Ezekiel like this throughout the book. Gabriel's first words make Daniel swoon (8:18a) which is more than what happens to Ezekiel. Whereas God's word raises Ezekiel (Ezek 2:1-2), Gabriel's touch helps Daniel to recover and stand erect again (Dan 8:18b). The remark following the interpretation (8:27) –

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53 After the short explication (7:17-18) Daniel describes the fourth horn and gets also information about this (7:19ff.). At least in part this passage will be an addition. Cf. Kratz, Visionen .

54 With 8:13f. a dialogue has been inserted which Daniel overhears (BHS is right to correct אלי and read אליו in v.14 instead). Two holy ones, i.e. members of the divine assembly, are talking about the calculation of time. For this cf. also 12:5-7.

55 That he is not introduced as an אישׁ, but as גבר is due to the name "Gabriel": the noun is intended to allude etymologically to the name ("El's, i.e, God's man").

Daniel feels exhausted and falls ill for some days after the vision – reminds of Ezekiel feeling distracted for seven days (Ezek 3:15). The episode describing Daniel's visionary encounter with Gabriel, the interpreting angel, and the effect of the vision on Daniel are clearly modelled on Ezek 1-3. By alluding to this prophetic predecessor the redactor[56] who inserted these sentences emphasizes that the angel is God's true representative.

The latest chapter in the second half of Dan refers to Gabriel again (9:21-23) obviously presupposing 8:16[57]. God reacts to Daniel's prayer by sending Gabriel[58]. Gabriel is flying (9:21) – this implies that he is a winged being, a feature that never occurred with regard to an interpreting angel so far. Here Gabriel tells Daniel that his praying made a word – sc. of God – come forth and it is Gabriel's task to transmit it to Daniel. The last vision in the Book of Daniel (Dan 10-12) again offers new aspects with regard to the interpreting angel[59]. First thing Daniel sees is a man standing there (10:5a). For the first time the outward appearance of an interpreting angel is now described (v.10:5b-6): He is clothed in linen (cf. Ezek 9:2)[60] – a feature of a priestly person. He wears a belt of gold. In spite of the clothing Daniel can perceive the angel's body which is like beryl or turquoise (תרשיש), his face is like lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, arms and feet like burnished copper or bronze (נחשת), and the sound of his speech like the noise of a multitude. The elements that serve to describe the angel's appearance by comparison are all found in Ezekiel's vision of God[61], namely in those parts characterizing the four beings carrying YHWH's throne. So the references to Ezekiel in Daniel's description allude to beings in the most immediate environment of God's throne. The passage suggests to the reader who is familiar with Ezekiel's vision that the man clothed like a priest is a celestial being very close to God[62]. Accordingly, Daniel will address the man as אדני later on (10:16, 17, 19) – as Zechariah did[63].

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56   Cf. Kratz, Visionen 228: V.16, 18f, 27b are additions inserted by the same hand.
57   Cf. Kratz, Visionen 234.
58   In 9:21 Gabriel is introduced as האיש.
59   There is an episode in 10:8-11 resembling 8:17-19, 27, so that Ezek 1:28-2:2 is evoked again.
60   The words איש אחד לבוש בדים … מתניו are identical in Dan and Ezek.
61   תרשיש Ezek 1:!6; 10:9 referring to the wheels; ברק Ezek 1:13; כעין אש לפידי Ezek 1:13; נחשת קלל Ezek 1:7; the noise is also part of Ezekiel's description, but, as the beings do not speak, it is the noise of their movement (cf. 1:24f.; 3:13).
62   But note that the angel is not (yet) winged as in the later passage in Dan :21.
63   When the angel talks to Daniel he cannot answer (10:15) until another humanoid being has touched his lips (10:16). This recalls Isa 6:7 (and alludes to Jer 1:9 as well). Obviously, in 10:16 the angel who appeared in 10:5 and the other humanoid are not

Now in Dan 10-12 it is open to debate whether the angel still functions as an interpreting angel in the strict sense of the term. The angel, who is also acting as a celestial warrior (10:13, 20), does not interpret a vision Daniel has just experienced, but reveals to him future events which are concealed to ordinary people. The long oracle he gives is not metaphorical or symbolical so that it would need explanation. In the immediate context the contents of Daniel's vision is the angel announcing what will happen. In the context of the book, however, the angel's words appear as an interpretation of the former vision (cf. 10:11, 14[64]). In this sense the angel comes close to the one visiting the Virgin Mary and announcing to her the miraculous birth of Jesus (Luke 1:26-38).

5. Conclusion

The history of the *angelus interpres* in writings of the Hebrew Bible is a short one: Since the man with the measuring line in Ezekiel's final vision turned out to be a late addition to the Book of Ezekiel, one cannot regard him any longer as paving the way for the interpreting angel who appears in Zechariah's night visions for the first time. Probably the origin of the *angelus interpres* is to be found in the concept of a divine assembly. Zechariah's interpreting angel is only characterized through his function. At the time when the Book of Daniel was composed, the interpreting angel is also described in terms of his outward appearance – and he has got a name, Gabriel. Thus he has become more of a personality. The authors of Dan clarify that the angel is very close to God: In the contact with the visionary he resembles YHWH as depicted in Ezek 1:28-2:2. His outward appearance, though, is likened to that of the celestial beings carrying YHWH's throne in Ezekiel, i.e. to God's most immediate servants. As the authors of Dan allude to Ezekiel's initial vision of YHWH several times, Ezek comes in as a point of reference at last.

Anyway, the interpreting angel clearly occurs in post-exilic times only. His existence is indicative of a theological tendency to increase God's transcendent nature. At the same time God is still present and still in contact with the world, and he still reveals his word to special persons. At least part – and increasingly more so – of God's revelations

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identical. In 10:18 the humanoid again touches Daniel's lips; it is not quite clear whether he is also the speaker in 10:19; this would rather be the angel who has spoken before.

64   Cf. Kratz, Visionen 232.

occur in visionary contexts, and they are explained or even transmitted by an emissary, an angel, the *angelus interpres* who functions as God's representative.

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Angelic Revelation in Jewish Apocalyptic Literature

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1. Introduction

In modern scholarly discussion, the term "apocalypse" is reckoned among the most controversial expressions. Borrowed from the Christian title in the Book of the Revelation of John (Rev 1:1: Ἀποκάλυψις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ) and used as a modern scholarly convention, the "apocalypse" started its career in the 19th century to become one of the major literary genres among the texts of the Tanach, the Christian Bible and in early Jewish literature.[1] Angelic beings, their functions, acts and speeches, are one of the most prominent and specific features within this genre. Currently, scholars tend to approach apocalyptic phenomena in a twofold way: while the still valuable standpoint of John J. Collins and others try to define the genre "apocalypse" by examining the contents of apocalyptic writings, other scholars deny that there ever existed the ancient genre of an "apocalypse" and restrict themselves to identifying literary conventions they call apocalyptic.[2] Notwithstanding this controversy of how to give a suitable description of the phenomenon, both approaches emphasize the central role of angels within their particular characterizations.

Suffice it to say here, how both lineages describe an "apocalypse" by referring to angelic beings. In his classical definition John J. Collins wrote that the "apocalypse" should be characterized as

> *a genre of revelatory literature with a narrative framework, in which a revelation is mediated by an otherworldly being to a human recipient, disclosing a transcendent reality …*[3]

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1   Cf. Schmidt, Apokalyptik *passim*.
2   See, e.g., Collins, Imagination 1-42, on the one hand and Wolter, Apokalyptik 178-179, on the other.
3   Collins, Imagination 5 (italics original).

Against this, Michael Wolter defines an "apocalypse" or apocalyptic writings as a figure of speech, when he summarizes:

> 'Apokalyptisch' nennen wir eine Redeform, die wir in solchen Texten vorfinden, deren Autoren die Leser zu Beginn darüber informieren (…), dass er ihnen etwas mitteilt, was menschlicher Erkenntnisfähigkeit bisher prinzipiell verschlossen war, weil es nur im Wege einer kognitiven Grenzüberschreitung zugänglich ist. […] als apokalyptische Rezeptionsanweisungen identifiziert werden: […] die Einführung eines Vermittlers, der aus der anderen Richtung kommt und dem Verfasser der Schrift Wissen transzendenter Provenienz verschafft (…).[4]

Obviously, both approaches refer to transcendent realities, as they were mediated to an earthly reality in apocalyptic writings. And among others, angels or angelic beings function as subjects of this process. To sum up, "apocalypticism" finds its goal in the revelation of otherworldly mysteries frequently mediated by angels or angelic beings.[5] And it does not matter in this context, anyhow, if one interprets this revelation as referring to a literary genre ("apocalypse": cf. Collins) or if one identifies in this revelation a sign for recipients to read the following text as influenced by apocalyptic hermeneutics ("Redeanweisung": cf. Wolter).[6]

The following paragraphs try to highlight the mediatory function of angels or angelic beings within Jewish apocalyptic literature in Hellenistic-Roman times. And this examination will be restricted to two aspects of an angelic mediatory function: the coming of evil through the hand of the Watchers and the revelation of divine mysteries to the chosen ones. Here, another analogy to apocalyptic thinking becomes apparent, because apocalyptic writings in general tend to confront the evil inclination with a hope of the salvation for the righteous.

A good case in point is the "Book of Watchers" (1En 1-36), one of the very early traditions of apocalyptic writings, dating from 3rd or 2nd century BCE (see bellow). It is significant, because "the *Book of Watchers* draws a clear line of demarcation between the rebellious angels who fathered the giants and introduced humans to rejected forms of knowledge, on the one hand, and those angels which instructed Enoch concerning the nature and structure of the universe, on the other."[7] While

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4   Wolter, Apokalyptik 181-182. Wolter's emphasis on certain speech forms reminds of alternative approaches to apocalyptic writings that lay weight on the "apocalyptic discourse" (cf. Carey, Introduction 10, and DiTommaso, Apocalypses I 249).

5   See, recently, also Becker, Apokalyptisches 298: "Die Enthüllung transzendenten 'Wissens' hat dabei als einer der tragenden Bestandteile der apokalyptischen Tradition überhaupt zu gelten."

6   For the recent discussions on "apocalypses" or "apocalyptic writings" and the questions of genre see the review article by DiTommaso, Apocalypses I 238-250.

7   Stuckenbruck, *Origins* 100.

texts from 1En 6-11, stemming from the 'Asa'el and Shemihazah tradi-tions[8] (see bellow), explain the Watchers' role negatively, the angel Uriel associates the positive function of an *angelus interpres* within the "Astronomical Book" (1En 72-82). Furthermore, the counterpart of an-gelic action is Enoch, the seventh in the genealogy of Gen 5 (v. 21-24), representing one central member of the antediluvian generations.[9] Enoch was the first character to forgo death, and he lived for 365 years on earth, what associates the solar year. Therefore, it is a small wonder that Enoch as, e.g., a scribe (cf. 1En 12:4; Jub 4:17-26) and visionary (cf. 1En 12-16; 17-36) later on was identified with the "son of man" (1En 71:13-17), i.e., an angel.[10] This means that angels in apocalyptic litera-ture face a person who has a cosmological and hyper-individual mean-ing.[11]

In general, three hermeneutical aspects should be taken into ac-count: First of all, angels function as a revelatory medium within apocalyptic literature. Second, their function is placed between the spheres: heaven, earth and sometimes also the underworld. And, third, the angelic counterparts show both, an acquaintance with this-worldly and otherworldly realities. All in all and already at this point, it can be concluded that angelic revelation obviously associates a cosmological worldview that stems only from Hellenistic-Roman times.[12] The follow-ing investigation will examine, after scrutinizing the concepts of angels and their revelations in apocalyptic literature in general, the positive and negative consequences of angelic revelation. Further, the emerging rivalry between God and angels, or between monotheism and angelol-ogy, should be taken into account, when the revelatory function of an-gelic beings is in focus.[13]

2. Angelic Revelation in Apocalyptic Writings

The books by Peter Schäfer, Michael Mach and Donata Dörfel provide comprehensive overviews concerning angelic beings in ancient Jewish

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8   Cf. VanderKam, Enoch 31-42.
9   Cf. VanderKam, Enoch 1-6; Hess, Enoch 508; Rowland, Enoch 301, and, recently, Raharimanantsoa, Mort 215-230.
10 Cf. Rowland, Enoch 302-303; Orlov, Counterpart 156-157.
11 Contrary to the function of messengers and angels in most of the OT texts: cf. Ger-stenberger, Boten 139-154.
12 Cf. Schwindt, Weltbilder 3-34.
13 Cf. Koch, Monotheismus 219-233, and, recently, Tuschling, Angels *passim*.

literature in general.[14] With regard to the topic of this examination, all three monographs have one thing in common: They identify, more or less explicitly, the revelatory function of angels in apocalyptic writings with the type of an *angelus interpres*."[15] Consequently, the revelatory activity of angelic beings becomes generally the chief occupation of angels in ancient Jewish literature. Corresponding to their comprehensive and different functions, angelic revelations are attested in nearly all literary genres among post-exilic writings. Their provenance is connected with the older traditions of the messenger of God ([יהוה] מלאך: cf. Gen 16:9-11; Num 22:22-27; Isa 37:36) and related expressions (כבוד יהוה: cf. Exod 16:7, 10; Ezek 43:4, 5; 44:4, or רוח: cf. 1Kgs 22:21) in the Hebrew Bible.[16]

One of the most significant and also ridiculous sceneries that present angelic figures of revelatory functions in a visionary context is the composition of seven night-visions in Zech 1-6.[17] Besides some still unresolved questions concerning the semantics of the metaphors frequently used in the visions (e.g., the man with the measuring cord: 2:5-9, the woman sitting in the Ephah: 5:5-11), the reader finds different terms for angelic beings (איש, מלאך יהוה, מלאך).[18] Most prominent is the המלאך הדבר בי in Zech 1:9, 13, 14; 2:2, 7; 4:1, 4, 5; 5:5, 10 and 6:4 who discloses the visionary reality to the seer *and* to the audience resp. the reader.[19] The setting of the visions as a whole finds its goal in a universalistic relief and retribution of the Temple in Jerusalem and "Israel" after seventy years of exile and gloominess (cf. Zech 1:12).[20] To sum up, it is apparent that the night-visions of Zech 1-6 describe angels and

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14 Cf. Schäfer, Rivalität 9-40; Mach, Entwicklungsstadien esp. 142-144, and 114-127, 129, where he lays emphasis on the priestly and heavenly provenance of angels in apocalyptic writings; Dörfel, Engel esp. 24, 255-257.

15 Cf. Schäfer, Rivalität 10: "In ganz besonderer Weise charakteristisch für die Engelvorstellung des nachexilischen Judentums ist der sog. angelus interpres (Deuteengel) oder Engel der Offenbarung."

16 Cf. Seebass, Engel 583-585; Dörfel, Engel 248-249, and the recent overview by Newsom, Angels 248-253.

17 For the sociology of the Zecharaiah group cf. Cook, Prophecy 153-158.

18 Especially the first vision in Zech 1:8-15 is enigmatic, because of a combination of all three types of angelic beings. For a possible solution cf. Delkurt, Engelwesen 20-41, who reconstructs a "logical" text (cf. Delkurt, Engelwesen 40-41) that is restricted to the מלאך as *angelus interpres*. More conclusive is Koch's assumption that finds here a hierarchy of angelic beings (see Koch, Monotheismus 220-221).

19 Cf. Delkurt, Engelwesen 31, who translates with NRSV "the angel who talked with me". But the *beth communicationis* has also in mind the addressees of the prophetic message: "the angel who reveals through me [i.e., the seer and prophet]" (cf. Jenni, Präpositionen 164-165).

20 Cf. recently Berner, Jahre 78-84, who assumes that concerning Zech 1 and 7 the epoch of the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem was meant.

angelic beings in a revelatory function that is, nevertheless, different from settings we find in texts called "apocalypses" in a literary sense.

The only "apocalypse" within the Hebrew Bible is attested in the visionary context of Dan 7-12. Here, the angels appear as figures carrying names.[21] While Gabriel explains the vision of the he-goat and the ram to the seer (cf. Dan 8:15-16)[22] and, also, comes back to interpret Jeremiah's (Jer 25:11-12; 29:10) re-invention of the seventy years as weeks of years (Dan 9:21, 24-27)[23], the more prominent angel Michael, called "one of the chief princes" (Dan 10:13: אחד השרים הראשנים) and "great prince" (Dan 12:1: השר הגדול), comes to fight against "the prince of the kingdom of Persia" within the war of patron angels and functions as an eschatological protector and advocate for Israel.[24] Both, Gabriel and Michael, appear also in lists of the four resp. seven archangels (cf. 1En 9 and 20).[25] In Qumran, a fragmentary text is preserved, called "Words of Michael" in Aramaic (4Q529), wherein Michael's function is to speak to the angels and to show a vision to Gabriel.[26] Only these examples show that in later apocalyptic writings the eschatological function of angels is much more elaborated and not restricted to the responsibility of an *angelus interpres*.

Another good example for the wide range of revelatory tasks is Uriel's role within the late Jewish apocalypse of 4 Ezra that dates from the end of the 1st century CE.[27] In general, this apocalypse from Roman times reflects on the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in a very

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21 Cf. Michael (מיכאל) in Dan 10:13, 21; 12:1 (cf. Jude 9; Rev 12:7) and Gabriel (גבריאל) in Dan 8:16; 9:21 (cf. Luke 1:19, 26). While Gabriel only appears as a heavenly figure in the Book of Daniel, Michael is also attested as a personal name in Num 13:13 (cf. 4QRPᶜ [4Q365] frag. 32 2); Ezra 8:8 and the Books of Chronicle (cf. 1Chr 5:13-14; 6:25; 7:3; 8:16; 12:21; 27:18; 2Chr 21:2).

22 Gabriel appears in Dan 8:15 as a "man:" כמראה־גבר.

23 Cf. Collins, Gabriel 338; Berner, Jahre 19-99.

24 Cf. Collins, Daniel 374, 390; Mach, Michael 570.

25 It is likely that the number of four archangels stems from the four living creatures in Ezek 1: cf. van Henten, Archangel 81; Tuschling, Angels 106-107.

26 Cf. 4Q529 frag. 1 1 + 4-5 (text: Puëch, Qumrân Grotte 4 4; translation follows García Martínez / Tigchelaar, Dead Sea 1061):

מלי כתבא די אמר מיכאל למלאכיא [...] 1   *1* Words of the book which Michael spoke to the angels […]

תמה חזית לגבריאל מלאכא[...] 4   *4* There I saw the angel Gabriel […]

בחזוא והחזיתה חזוה ואמר לי ד]י[...] 5   *5* like the vision and I showed him the vision and he says to me tha[t…].

27 For the dating of 4 Ezra cf. Collins, Imagination 195-196; Becker, Apokalyptisches 317. On the widespread provenance and functions of Uriel see Stone, Fourth Ezra 82-83; Mach, Uriel 885-886.

specific manner.[28] While the first three visions try to highlight the "way of the Most High" for the pious ones in a dialogue between Ezra and the *angelus interpres* Uriel (cf. 4 Ezra 3:31; 4:1-4, 10-11; 5:34)[29], in the fourth vision, the so-called Zion vision (cf. 9:26-10:59), "there is a sudden reversal, and Ezra comes to share the angel's point of view."[30] He sees a woman mourning for the death of her son. It follows the transformation of the woman into a city with massive foundations. And this transformation functions as a turning point in the rather universalistic concept of the whole book.[31] Ezra, as the visionary angel, asks in 4 Ezra 10:28:

> Where is the angel Uriel, who came to me at first? For it was he who brought me into this overpowering bewilderment; my end has become corruption, and my prayer a reproach.[32]

In the ensuing interpretation of the vision Uriel explains, again as the *angelus interpres*, that Ezra has seen many secrets from the Most High (cf. 10:38). Furthermore, the woman resp. the city stands for the new and heavenly Jerusalem in the brightness of her glory and the loveliness of her beauty (cf. 10:50). To sum up: Uriel's interpretations of the vision are highly significant. And what is more, Ezra and Uriel reversed their rôles in the central fourth Zion vision. Therefore, it cannot be denied that also Uriel's function as an angel of revelation in 4 Ezra covers more than the role of a mediator or an interpreter of the apocalyptic message. The angel becomes part of the apocalyptic message.

3. Angelic Revelation in the Book of Watchers

Another interesting aspect of revelations mediated by angelic beings stems from the behavior of the Watchers in 1En 6-11. These chapters are part of the "Book of Watchers" (1En 1-36) that formed, together with the "Astronomical Book" (1En 72-82), the most ancient parts of the composite work of 1 En, as entirely preserved only in Ethiopic, but also

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28 Schmid, Zerstörung 183-206, characterizes the way in which 4 Ezra interpreted the destruction of the Temple with the term "Heilsparadox." Schmid considers the inclusion of the destruction of the Temple in 70 CE into a doctrine of salvation as unique in Jewish tradition (cf. also Becker, Apokalyptisches 328).

29 Cf. Becker, Apokalyptisches 332.

30 Collins, Imagination 199 (cf. also Becker, Apokalyptisches 336).

31 For the strategy and meaning of this concept see Beyerle, Richter 315-337; Becker, Apokalyptisches 324-341.

32 Translation: Stone, Ezra 326. The Latin text reads: *Ubi est Urihel angelus, qui a principio venit ad me? Quoniam ipse me fecit venire in multitudinem excessus mentis huius, et factus est finis meus in corruptionem et oratio mea in inproperium.*

found among the Aramaic fragments from Qumran most of which date from the end of the 3rd or the first half of the 2nd century BCE (cf. 4QEnᵃ ar [4Q201] and 4QEnᵇ ar [4Q202]).[33] The "Book of Watchers" consists of three main sections: chaps. 1-5: a universal judgment with a theophany at the beginning, chaps. 6-16: the fall of the Watchers and Enoch's function as prophet of judgment, chaps. 17-36: the cosmic journeys of Enoch.[34] Especially 1En 6-11, the revolt of the heavenly Watchers, is of special interest here. These chapters speak of the revolt of the Watchers to corrupt the world and lead to the divine judgment. At least two versions are apparent: the Shemihazah story explains the evil inclination by means of the sexual defilement of the Watchers with women (cf. also Gen 6:1-4), while the 'Asa'el tradition uses the motif of improper instruction to humanity. The date, provenance, religio-historical influence and literary composition of chaps. 6-11 within the "Book of Watchers" are still a matter of scholarly dispute.[35] Leaving this ongoing discussion aside, it is very probable that 1En 6-11 collects traditions that generally predate the Enochic compositions from Hellenistic times as they are also represented in the remaining chapters of the "Book of Watchers."[36] The most convincing argument for taking the composition of Shemihazah and 'Asa'el as an independent unit is the remarkable fact that the name of Enoch is missing in 1En 6-11.[37]

Martha Himmelfarb and Annette Y. Reed recently observed a significant reservation in later re-interpretations of the fall of the Watchers when it comes to the motif of the revelation of heavenly secrets as it is

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33 The date of the fragments from Qumran, elaborated by J.T. Milik, are widely accepted: cf. Nickelsburg, Enoch 9-10.

34 Cf. Collins, Imagination 47. See VanderKam, Enoch 25, who also distinguishes 1En 6-11; 12-16 and two cosmic journeys in chaps. 17-19; 20-36.

35 E.g., Nickelsburg, Enoch 169-171, finds in the violence connected with the giants, the result of the defilement in the Shemihazah story, a reflection on the wars of the Diadochi (323-302 BCE) and puts the tradition in the 4th century BCE. He also argues for a secondary insertion of the 'Asa'el material (cf. Nickelsburg, Enoch 165, 172, 190) and writes (191): "These various stages of expansion or interpolation took place some time between the creation of the Shemihazah myth (ca. 300 B.C.E. or earlier) and our earliest evidence for the present full text (ca. 165 B.C.E.)" — see also the critique of Collins, Imagination 49-51, and Reed, Ascent 50-53. For the differing literary models within the history of scholarship cf. recently Wright, Origin 29-37.

36 Wright, *Origin* 37, summarizes his history of scholarship as follows: "As can be understood from the above presentation, no consensus can be reached about the origin of the Fallen Angel tradition in *BW* ["Book of Watchers", SB], except that it was not original to the author."

37 Nevertheless, Enoch holds a central role within the judgment of the Watchers that follows in chaps. 12-16. For the importance of the motif of angelic instructions in both, chaps. 6-11 and 12-16: cf. Reed, Ascent 54-66.

connected with 'Asa'el[38] in 1En 6-11.[39] A good case in point is the early
reception of the Watchers' story in the Book of Jubilees (ca. 150 BCE).[40]
Both strands from 1En 6-11, the Shemihazah and 'Asa'el tradition, ap-
pear, e.g., in Jub 4. But while the sexual defilement of the Watchers is
retold in Jub 4:22, the revelation motif is quoted, *pace* 1En 6-11, in a
rather positive attitude (Jub 4:15):[41]

> Jub 4:22: He [Enoch, SB] testified to the Watchers who had sinned with the
> daughters of men because they had begun to mix with earthly women so
> that they became defiled. Enoch testified against all of them.

> Jub 4:15: […] He [Malalael, SB] named him Jared, because during his life-
> time the angels of the Lord who were called Watchers descended to earth
> to teach mankind and to do what is just and upright upon the earth.

The text of Jub 4:15, a re-interpretation of Gen 5:15, explains the He-
brew name Jared with the verbal root ירד ("to descend") and the addi-
tional hint to the Watchers' descent in order to provide knowledge (cf.
also 1En 6:6). This knowledge is qualified positively as "what is just
and upright upon earth." Contrary to that, the 'Asa'el-story in 1En 6-11
emphasizes the negative results of 'Asa'el's teaching. In a petitionary
prayer of the four archangels, Michael, Sariel, Raphael and Gabriel
mourn about 'Asa'el's misdeeds (1En 9:6):[42]

> You see what Asael has done,
> who has told all iniquity upon the earth,
> and has revealed the eternal mysteries that are in heaven,[43]
> which the sons of men were striving to learn.

In the context of chap. 9 two types of angels and angelic functions ap-
pear in one and the same section of the story: the Watcher 'Asa'el as
revealer of heavenly secrets (cf. also 1En 8:1; 10:7) and the four archan-
gels as mediators or intercessors[44]. While the latter angels play their

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38 On the name and different forms like 'Asa'el, 'Asa'sel or 'Asas'el cf. Olyan, A Thou-
    sand Thousands Served Him 109-111.

39 Cf. Himmelfarb, Ascent 77-78: "Thus knowledge of the very phenomena that are
    signs of faithfulness in the introduction to the Book of the Watchers and cause for
    praise of God in the tour to the ends of the earth here contributes to the corruption of
    humanity. The negative attitude of this strand of the story of the fall of the Watchers
    is quite isolated in apocalyptic literature." See also Reed, Angels *passim*.

40 On the content and date of Jub cf. the short and comprehensive introduction in Van-
    derKam, Introduction 97-100; cf. also Berner, Jahre 234-238.

41 For the following translation cf. van Ruiten, History 153, 162. For the interpretation
    cf. van Ruiten, History 159-160, and Nickelsburg, Enoch 195-196.

42 The translation follows Nickelsburg, Enoch 202, 204, who also discusses the text.

43 The Greek texts preserved: καὶ ἐδήλωσεν τὰ μυστήρια τοῦ αἰῶνος τὰ ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ
    (Codex Panopolitanus) and ἐδίδαξεν γὰρ τὰ μυστήρια καὶ ἀπεκάλυψε τῷ αἰῶνι τὰ ἐν
    τῷ οὐρανῷ (Greek Syncellus).

44 Cf. Nickelsburg, Enoch 206, and the "Excursus" 208-210.

part as intercessors before the "Most High" for the benefit of mankind in a corrupted world (1En 9:1-3; cf. 7:6; 8:4),[45] 'Asa'el's instructions are the reason for the godlessness on earth.[46] As 1En 8:1-2 states:[47]

> [1] Asael taught men to make swords of iron and weapons and shields and breastplates and every instrument of war. He showed them metals of the earth and how they should work gold to fashion it suitably, and concerning silver, to fashion it for bracelets and ornaments for women. And he showed them concerning antinomy and eye paint and all manner of precious stones and dyes. And the sons of men made them for themselves and for their daughters, and they transgressed and led astray the holy ones. [2] And there was much godlessness upon the earth, and they made their ways desolate.

Here, it is clearly underlined that 'Asa'el's instructions to humanity, embracing metallurgy, mining, cosmetics and fabrication of artifacts caused the desolation upon earth.[48] Another decisive difference between the archangels and the Watchers is indicated from their relation to God. On the one hand, the archangels appear as mediators between mankind and God.[49] On the other hand, 'Asa'el never acts as an angelic being which was legitimized by the divine power. All in all, the instruction motif, in various connections a central indication of apocalyptic literature that was positively connoted, becomes disavowed in the 'Asa'el tradition. And this is obviously caused by a missing divine au-

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45 Nickelsburg, Enoch 205, 207, speaks of the archangels as "God's eyes on the world."

46 The latter re-interpretation of the myth in 1En 12-16 (cf. Nickelsburg, Enoch 229-230, who assumes a date in the first half of the 3rd century BCE) affirms the adequate role of the Watchers in terms of intercession and petition for mankind, as it characterizes the archangels in 1En 9:1-11. E.g., 1En 15:2 calls upon Enoch (translation by Nickelsburg, Enoch 267): "Go and say to the watchers of heaven, who sent you to petition in their behalf, 'You should petition in behalf of men, and not men in behalf of you.'"

47 For the translation and the discussion of the text see Nickelsburg, Enoch 188-189. See also Bhayro, Narrative 146-149, who finds in the elaborated text of the Greek Syncellus a later literary stage of the "Book of Watchers" that was already influenced by the Watchers' story from Jub 4-5, what is highly hypothetic. A further problem stems from the question of the religio-historical background that formed 1En 8:1. The scholarly debate discusses mythological elements from the ANE and from the Greek world (especially the Prometheus myth). E.g., Nickelsburg, Enoch 191-193, comes to the conclusion that the Prometheus myth provides the closest parallel to the 'Asa'el material. Consequently, the Greek traditions could have formed "a bridge between 1En and the old Semitic traditions." (so Nickelsburg, Enoch 1 193; see also Wright, Origin 115-117)

48 Cf. also Wright, Origin 105: "This [i.e. 1En 8:2, SB] clearly describes the corruption of humanity due to the teachings of the angels."

49 This is also emphasized in *1En* 9:4-5, wherein the archangels invoke upon the "God of gods" who is predicated as king and creator.

thorization. As in several other instances, God functions as a distinctive feature in the dualistic world of apocalypses.[50]

Textual evidence for an angelic revelation that implies divine sanction is preserved at the end of the story of the fall of the Watchers (1En 10:1-11:2). In 1En 9:6, 'Asa'el's revelations are characterized by two verbs: "to show" and "to teach" (see above). The Greek texts read forms of δηλόω and διδάσκω (cf. also 7:1). Strikingly the same verbs are used in 1En 10:2-3, where the angel Uriel – or Sariel[51] – is commissioned to instruct Noah.[52] Therefore, text and context in 1En 6-11 underline that the question of divine legitimacy is crucial, when it comes to distinguish between revelation as the cause for the corruption of the earth ('Asa'el) and revelation as a positive sign of the end-times (archangels). Consequently, it is suitable to speak of a "*theocentric*" argument.

So far, the observation by Martha Himmelfarb and Annette Y. Reed about a restrictive use of the instruction or revelation motif with negative associations (see above) seems correct. In this study, we, nevertheless, followed only the path of re-interpretation in the early Jewish literature, wherein the Book of Jubilees provides the most important account of a retelling of the fall of the Watchers.[53] And besides the quotations from Enoch's vision (Jub 4:15, 22), already discussed above, some other verses that refer to the flood (cf. Jub 5:1-10; 7:20-25; 10:1-7) and Jub 8:3 should be taken under consideration.[54] The only passage in Jub 5:1-10 which could be suspected of being dependent on the 'Asa'el story in 1En 9-11 is the quotation of Gen 6:5b in Jub 5:2. Here, it is stated that every thought of the heart (Gen 6:5: וכל־יצר מחשבת לבו) was only evil among mankind.[55] Furthermore, the text of Jub 5 combines the flood with the fall of the Watchers (cf. also CD 2:14-21; T. Naph 3:5).[56] The deluge is interpreted as judgment against the Watchers who married the daughters of the children of men and begot giants (Jub 5:1).

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50 For the crucial role of God in ancient Jewish apocalypticism cf. Beyerle, Gottesvorstellungen *passim*.

51 On the discussion about the original name cf. Nickelsburg, Enoch 216 n. 10:1ᶜ.

52 Cf. the observations by Molenberg, Study 140-141, 145. Nickelsburg, Enoch 184, contends that the motif of instruction is secondary.

53 Further evidence is attested in some traditions preserved in the Qumran texts. For the data cf. Reed, Angels *passim*. See also the references collected by D. Dimant and quoted by Wright, Origin 35 n. 123, and Bhayro, Narrative 12 n. 6.

54 See also the survey provided by Nickelsburg, Enoch 72-73, and the detailed discussion in VanderKam, Traditions 318-326. It is not the aim of this study to decide whether Jub is literary dependent on 1En (cf. VanderKam, Enoch 110-121, and Response 163-164) or goes back to traditions that were common also to the Enochic material (cf. van Ruiten, Dependency 90-93).

55 Especially Kugel, Traditions 201-203, connects this motif with the Watchers' myth.

56 Cf. van Ruiten, History 195-196.

While Jub 7:20-25 is part of the instruction that Noah has provided for his children and grandchildren[57], Jub 10:1-7 refers to the "spirits," the children of the Watchers, and the acts of the Watchers in general (v. 5). At last, Jub 8:3 is of more interest:[58]

> He [Kainan, SB] found an inscription[,] which the ancients had incised in a rock. He read what was in it, copied it, and sinned on the basis of what was in it, since it was the Watchers' teaching by which they used to observe the omens of the sun, moon, and stars, and every heavenly sign.

As the Watchers' teaching connected with sin and the sexual defilement with women is not mentioned in Jub 8, this text seems to contradict the observation of Himmelfarb and Reed. Recently, Eibert J.C. Tigchelaar finds in the Book of Jubilees a mainly restricted and much less harsh view on the negative allusions associated with the teachings of the Watchers in 1En 6-16.[59] One can go beyond this statement, if the reference of Jub 8:3 in 1En 8:3 is taken into account. In general, the passage from the "Book of Watchers" criticizes angelic teachings, but of a different kind compared to what *'Asa'els's* teaching (cf. 1En 8:1) was about. It is because Jub 8:3 and 1En 8:3 coincide, when they refer to magic, magical arts and divination resp. astrology[60] instead of referring to metallurgy, mining, cosmetics and fabrication of artifacts as in 1En 8:1 (see above).[61] Most scholars agree, therefore, that 1En 8:1 and v. 3 stem from different literary strata.[62] George W.E. Nickelsburg has reconstructed the following text of 1En 8:3:[63]

> Shemihazah taught [Aram. אלקן, SB] spells and the cutting of roots.
> Hermani taught sorcery for the loosing of spells and magic and skill.
> Baraqel taught the signs of the lightning flashes.
> Kokabel taught the signs of the stars.

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57 See van Ruiten, History 293, referring to v. 20: "It looks somewhat as though Noah took over this task from the Watchers."

58 Translation: van Ruiten, History 314. While the whole section of Jub 8:1-7b can be considered a rewriting of Gen 11:10-15, the story of Kainan in Jub 8:1-4 has no counterpart in the Book of Genesis (cf. the discussion of the text in van Ruiten, History 313-318).

59 See Tigchelaar, Jubilees 101, but cf. also VanderKam, Response 165.

60 Cf. also 1En 7:1; 9:8 and Nickelsburg, Enoch 184, 213.

61 For a very detailed discussion of 1En 8:3 see Nickelsburg, Enoch 197-201.

62 Another reason for a literary distinction in 1En 8 can be found in the first position of Shemihazah among "the names of their chiefs" in 1En 6:7 and 8:3 (cf. Greek Syncellus), while 'Asa'el is missing in 8:3 and in the tenth position in 6:7. Contrary to that, 'Asa'el is mentioned first in 8:1. Cf., e.g., recently Bhayro, Narrative 13-18, 246-247; Nickelsburg, Enoch 190-191.

63 Nickelsburg, Enoch 188. Besides the Eth. Mss. also Aram. (4QEnᵃ ar, 4QEnᵇ ar) and Greek witnesses came to us. The text is discussed in Nickelsburg, Enoch 189, and Bhayro, Narrative 152-156.

> Ziqel taught the signs of the shooting stars.
> Arteqoph taught the signs of the earth.
> Shamsiel taught the signs of the sun.
> Sahriel taught the signs of the moon.
> And they all began to reveal mysteries [Aram.: גלה רז, SB] to their wives
> and to their children.

Despite the fact that also 'Asa'el "revealed the eternal mysteries that are in heaven" (1En 9:6; see above), in the passage quoted above the eight of twenty "chiefs" (Aram. רבן, Greek ἄρχων) or "dekadarchs" (cf. 1En 6:7) are listed. Their teachings comprise sorcery and astrology, and at the end of the passage all of this is summarized as a revelation of mysteries (1En 8:3; 4QEnᵃ ar [4Q201] col. iv 5 and 4QEnᵇ ar [4Q202] col. iii 5: לגליה רזין).[64] Obviously, the "Book of Watchers" transmitted different strands that preserved different contents of what is meant, if a "revelation of mysteries" has negative consequences. Furthermore, "the omens of the sun, moon, and stars, and every heavenly sign" in Jub 8:3 refer to the teaching of the "dekadarchs" and not to the 'Asa'el story. The teachings of those "chiefs" materialize the otherwise positively connoted revelations[65] in the direction of divination and astrology.

A reason why the Book of Jubilees refers to this aspect of a negative teaching is hard to provide, because of the very complex shape of literary strata within 1En 6-11 (see above). But 1En 8:3 was probably a later insertion into the Shemihazah story and also of independent provenance compared to the Shemihazah and 'Asa'el stories.[66] Besides this – highly hypothetic – literary solution, another parallel between Jub and 1En is apparent: Both compositions criticize divination and astrology as they were practiced and revealed to humans by Watchers or angelic beings related to them.[67] On the other hand both texts also refer to astrology in a positive way. And both, Jub and 1 En, connect astrological knowledge with the figure of Enoch.[68] Again, angelic revelation appears to be ambiguous in apocalyptic writings. And, as with the 'Asa'el story, the "*theocentric*" argument is decisive here (see above). As 4Q536 frag. 2 col. i 8 has it:[69]

יגלא רזין כעל יונין[...]	[…] he will reveal mysteries like the Most High Ones

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64 For the text cf. García Martínez / Tigchelaar, Dead Sea 402, 406.
65 Cf. Dan 2:28-29, 47; 1QHᵃ 9:21; 4Q536 frag. 1 col. i 8; 1En 16:3; 61:5; 106:19; 2 Bar 48:3; 3 Bar 1:6, 8; 2:5; T. Levi 2:10; Sib Or 3:812.
66 Cf. Nickelsburg, Enoch 190-191; Bhayro, Narrative 11-20.
67 See van Ruiten, History 317-318.
68 Cf. Jub 4:17-26; 1En 72-82 and VanderKam, Enoch 17-25.111-118; van Ruiten, History 160-166.
69 Text: Puëch, Qumrân Grotte 4 165; translation: García Martínez / Tigchelaar, Dead Sea 1073.

Consequently, if the revelation is not legitimized from God or a divine being, it causes defilement and ravages on earth. This is also true of astrological insights. And it seems probable that the Book of Jubilees referred to 1En 8:3, simply because Jub 4:17-26 and Enoch's familiarity with astrology could work as a counterpart to the Watchers' myth.[70] But not only the message of the angelic revelation shows ambiguities. Also the subjects of divulgation, the Watchers as angelic beings, associate positive and negative acts and attitudes.[71] It has been recognized for a long time that the Shemihazah story in 1En 6-11 has re-interpreted the neutral report of descent of the sons of God in Gen 6:1-4 as a negative event.[72] Lately, the telling of the Watchers' story concerning the revelation of knowledge, in a positive and negative mood, provides another analogy. Nevertheless, the difference is that this strand has no clear biblical or "canonical" sources.

To round off the discussion about the Watchers' revelation we finally have to consider the idea of monotheism, generally presupposed in the apocalyptic traditions. Nevertheless, Jews and Christians discussed the problematic relation between monotheism and angelology from ancient times onward. For instance, it is still a matter of scholarly debate how Jewish angelology influenced the early Christian doctrine

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70 In this case, Tigchelaar's thesis of a less harsh view on the negative allusions associated with the teachings of the Watchers in the Book of Jubilees (see above) is rather unsatisfactory.

71 For a positive characterization of the Watchers cf. in Aramaic: Dan 4:10, 14, 20; 1QapGen ar 6:13-15; 1En 12:2-3 (4QEnᶜ ar [4Q204] col. v 19: ‏[ו]אׄרו עׄן‏[ן]ראׄ ...]); 22:6 (4QEnᵉ ar [4Q206] frag. 2 col. ii 5: ‏[ו]לרפׄאׄ[ל לעירׄא וקדישׄא‏); 93:2 (4QEnᵍ ar [4Q212] col. iii 21: ‏חנוך אׄחׄזׄ[ת]ׄממׄר עירין וקדישׄן‏) and in Hebrew: Jub 4:15; for a negative characterization and function see, besides the texts in Jub and 1En already mentioned, in Aramaic: 1En 13:10 (4QEnᶜ ar [4Q204] col. vi 8: ‏וׄמוׄכח לעירׄי שׄמ‏[יׄא‏), in Hebrew: CD 2:18, and in Greek: T. Reu 5:6-7; T. Naph 3:5. If the conjecture עׄרׄיׄא in 4QVisions of Amramᵇ ar [4Q544] frag. 2 2 by J.T. Milik can be accepted (cf. Puëch, Qumrân Grotte 4 326-327; García Martínez / Tigchelaar, Dead Sea 1088), then 4Q544 frag. 1 10-14 distinguishes between good and evil Watchers (so Tuschling, Angels 89 n. 377). Both categories of Watchers are intermingled within the concept of seven heavens in 2 En (see 2 En 17:3; 18:3, 7-8 and Böttrich, Weltweisheit 149-153 with 152 n. 28). Recently, Bhayro, Narrative 21-25, challenged the identification of עׄיׄר with angelic beings. This identification is only true, so Bhayro, since the LXX of Dan 4 read עׄיׄר וקדׄשׄ as a ἐνδιαδυοῖν influenced by 1En 6-11. Originally, the Babylonian setting of Dan 4 calls for a connection between עׄור ("being awake / watchful") and the Akkadian *root barû* ("to watch over") that signifies also the Babylonian diviner who was engaged in haruspexology. And קׄדׄשׄ referred to the "holy ones", i.e. the priests who received the omens. This derivation is very unlikely, because neither the distinction of עׄיׄר and קׄדׄשׄ nor the connection of עׄיׄר with Babylonian extispicy is attested within Jewish literature about the Watchers. For the "classical" interpretation see recently Nickelsburg, Enoch 140-141; Collins, Watcher 893-894; Tuschling, Angels 89-91.

72 Cf. Bhayro, Narrative 25 with n. 15.

of Christology.[73] But most scholars generally agree that the developed veneration of one God did not contradict the elaboration of angelologies in ancient Judaism.[74] Both developments sometimes caused mutual influence. But in various ways they evolved independently. What is more, ancient Jewish angelology denies nearly all clear-cut differentiation and categorization. Only very rough classifications are possible. For example, while in the early period angels act mainly on earth mediating divine messages, since the 2nd century BCE, their place is in heaven to praise God and conduct war in the heavenly sphere.[75] Good cases in point are the "Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice" from Qumran and Dan 10-12. The stories about the fall of the Watchers refer to the earlier *and* to the later tradition. The revelation of heavenly secrets, even if it is not for good, recalls the mediatory function of the angelic beings. On the other hand, the Watchers' descent alludes to the heavenly realm as their dwelling place. What is important here is the proximity of angels, even of the Watchers, to God. And this proximity never challenged God's incontestable autocracy.

4. Conclusions

The topic of angelic revelation touches a core problem of apocalypses and apocalyptic literature in ancient Judaism. Consequently, angels that appear in a revelatory or visionary context figure large in the apocalyptic worldview. Not only in their role as *angelus interpres* they disclose a new reality that is radically distinguished from and wholly incomparable to those realities which the ancient tradition's contemporaries became aware of. The angel of revelation, as mediator between heaven and earth, personalizes in some way the cosmic reference quantity of apocalyptic texts. In an apocalyptic scheme both heaven and earth are concerned.

Even a cursory survey of angelic revelations in Second Temple Judaism shows that it is unsatisfactory to confine the acts of angels to their hermeneutical function, e.g., to "translate" visions. In short, angelic revelation embraces more than speeches to remedy the "*horror vacui*" of the visionary. Sometimes angels become part of the vision of

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73 Cf. Vollenweider, Monotheismus 22-23; Schrage, Einzigkeit 91-184; Tuschling, Angels 5-7.

74 E.g., Vollenweider, Monotheismus 40, states: "Die Herausbildung des Monotheismus Israels geht mit der Ausbildung angelologischer Konzeptionen einher." Both strands, monotheism and angelology, meet, e.g., in a text found at Qumran: 4Q377 frag. 1 col. ii 7-12 (cf. VanderKam / Brady, Pentateuch 213-216; Orlov, Moses 168).

75 Cf. Tuschling, Angels 108.

the End, as in 4 Ezra. Sometimes angelic revelation denotes rather a certain behavior or attitude than an interpretation of portents of the end, as the Shemihazah story in 1En 6-11.

One of the most interesting questions is: What happens, if angelic revelation is explicitly not determined to supply eschatological hope, but to provoke evil within the course of the world? Here, the 'Asa'el story in the "Book of Watchers" and its early retelling in the Book of Jubilees are significant. For several reasons (see above), the negative implications of angelic divulgation are caused by the angel's renunciation of God. Consequently, not only the pictures of hope for a salutary end-time but also those metaphors of distress and evil inclination can be couched into acts of angelic revelations. Furthermore, the "*theocentric*" interpretation makes it possible to place angels in the surroundings of God. As Harold Bloom puts it:[76]

> Whether we interpret them as God's messengers, or his warriors, or even his administrators, angels are meaningless apart from God, even when they are in rebellion against him. Palpable as this is, we are wise to keep reminding ourselves of it. To an atheist or skeptic, angels can have no reality, and yet the best modern American poet[s], the unbelieving Wallace Stevens, invokes what he calls 'the angel of reality' in his work.

To speak as a historian, one does not have to be a "skeptic" to find all those angels beyond the "real world" that denied their divine realm.

Abstract

The article discusses different concepts of angelic revelation in Second Temple Judaism. First, angelic revelation is closely related to apocalyptic writings. No matter how an "apocalypse" should be defined, the disclosure of heavenly secrets denotes a key figure in apocalyptic thinking. After a survey of functions of angelic revelations in ancient Jewish apocalyptic literature follows a detailed discussion of the fall of the Watchers in 1En 6-11. Here, the study concentrates on the 'Asa'el story, wherein the revelation of heavenly knowledge is determined as an act of evil. The discussion of texts in the "Book of Watchers" and the Book of Jubilees leads to the conclusion that angelic revelation is in need of a divine legitimation. Finally, this so-called "theocentric" argument is connected with the problem of monotheism.

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76 Bloom, Omens 74-75.

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III.

The "Work" of Archangel Raphael

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In the book of Tobit the archangel Raphael introduces himself to young Tobiah as someone who has come to Nineveh to work (ἐργατεύεσθαι, Tob 5:5). So what is Raphael's work? What does he do?

Our first clue concerning Raphael's work comes from his commission. He is sent by God to heal Tobit's blindness, to free Raguel's daughter Sarah from the demon Asmodeus, and to arrange the marriage of Sarah and Tobit's son Tobiah (3:17). At the end of the book, Tobiah reports that Raphael indeed cured his wife Sarah and his father Tobit and adds that he guided him safely on his journey and brought back the money Tobit had deposited in Media (12:2-3). Raphael himself adds that he presented the prayers of Tobit and Sarah before God, reported Tobit's good deeds to God, and was sent to put Tobit to the test (12:12-14).[1]

But does Raphael really do *all* these things? He is clearly a guide and protector. We must believe that he stands before God and presents the prayers of the faithful. But is he really a healer and a marriage broker? Not exactly. It is Tobiah who applies the fish gall to his father's eyes and peels away the scales that blind him (11:11-13). It is Tobiah who takes over the marriage negotiations and insists that Raguel allow him to marry Sarah (7:9-11). Tobiah is the one who burns the fish's liver and heart to drive Asmodeus away from Sarah (8:2-3). What is it that Raphael, whose name means "God heals," really does and how does he do it?

The Angel as Messenger

Raphael's primary work is the specific work of an angel. He is a messenger (ἄγγελος = "messenger"). He conveys messages from God to human beings and from human beings back to God. God has sent him,

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1   Francis de Sales identifies "the three good offices which the great angel Raphael fulfilled for his dear Tobias": guiding, preserving from dangers, and consoling and strengthening in difficulties, Treatise chap. 21: "How Our Savior's Loving Attractions Assist and Accompany Us to Faith and Charity," downloaded 5/23/07 from http://www.ccel.org/cceldesales/love.html).

not to heal, but to teach Tobiah how to heal. Raphael also informs To-
biah that he must marry Raguel's daughter Sarah and he has all the
information Tobiah needs (6:11-13). Once more it is clear that his role is
that of messenger. He instructs Tobiah; but it is Tobiah who asks Ra-
guel to allow him to marry Sarah. In these two examples, Raphael
brings God's word to human beings, but his duties also include carry-
ing messages from human beings to God. He informs Tobit and Tobiah
that he was the one who presented the record of Tobit's and Sarah's
prayers before God. He also presented to God the news of Tobit's good
deeds (12:12). Finally, Raphael acts as messenger between human be-
ings. After the wedding Tobiah sends him to Gabael to deliver the bond
of deposit and collect the money Tobit left with him years ago (9:2). In
addition, Raphael informs Gabael of Tobiah's wedding and invites him
to the celebration (9:5). In his final speech, he returns to the role of mes-
senger from God to human beings, informing Tobit and Tobiah of his
identity and God's purpose and exhorting them to pray in thanksgiv-
ing (12:15-20).

The Angel as Medical Advisor

On the first night of their journey, Raphael instructs Tobiah to catch the
fish that threatened to swallow his foot (6:2)[2] and to remove the gall,
heart, and liver and keep them because they are useful as medicine
(φάρμακον, G[II] 6:4). When Tobiah asks for further information, Raphael
informs him that the heart and liver will drive away evil spirits and the
gall, applied to a blind person's eyes, will restore sight (6:7-9). The
reader is immediately alerted to the correspondence between this fish
medicine and the ailments of Tobit and Sarah, even though Tobiah
seems unaware of the coincidence. Raphael must repeat and elaborate
on his instructions for each healing.

When Tobiah is about to approach his blind father, Raphael re-
freshes his memory and adds details: Smear the gall on his eyes and
peel off the scales (11:4, 7-8). Tobiah follows Raphael's instructions and
Tobit is healed. Tobit suffers from a medical condition and Raphael's

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2   G[II], represented primarily by Sinaiticus, says that the fish wanted to swallow To-
bias's foot (ἐβουλέτο καταπιεῖν τὸν πόδα τοῦ παιδαρίου); G[I], represented primarily
by Vaticanus (B) and Alexandrinus (A), says that the fish wanted to swallow the boy
(ἐβουλήθη καταπιεῖν το παιδάριον). Aramaic 4Q197 agrees with G[II] (רגל) as does the
Old Latin (circumplexus est pedes eius). The Syriac version agrees with G[I] as does the
Vulgate (ad devorandum eum). For all Greek references, see Hanhart, Tobit; for the
Aramaic and Old Latin, see Fitzmyer, Tobit 205.

recipe for the healing of his blindness reflects medical practice of the second century B.C.E. Ben Sira, whose book is contemporary with the book of Tobit, also recommends respect for the doctor and his medications (Sir 38:1-15; see φάρμακα in 38:4). The first-century B.C.E. book of Wisdom declares that "the creatures of the world are wholesome and there is not a destructive drug (φάρμακον) among them" (Wis 1:14).[3]

The medical knowledge of the period is affirmed, but the approval of medical means is not unconditional in the book of Tobit. Earlier Tobit had consulted doctors (ἰατρούς) who, according to G^{II}, applied medication (φάρμακα), which did not help but only worsened his condition (2:10). Now the φάρμακον that Raphael recommends is effective (11:11-13 G^{II}). This revelation of healing methods by an angel reflects the statement in *Jubilees*[4] that God told one of the angels "to teach Noah" the means of healing "so that he might heal by means of herbs of the earth. And Noah wrote everything in a book just as we taught him according to every kind of healing" (*Jub.* 10.10, 12-13).[5] The Jewish tradition in the second century B.C.E. seems to have affirmed natural means of healing, but with the caution that these means are revealed by God or God's angel. As Schüngel-Straumann says, healings happen both through human knowledge and the power of God.[6]

The angel in *Jubilees* who says that "one of us" was commissioned to do this teaching is an "angel of the presence" (*Jub.* 2.1). Raphael identifies himself as "one of the seven angels who enter and serve before the Glory of the Lord" (Tob 12:15), thus, it would seem, an "angel of the presence." A few of centuries later *1 Enoch* identifies Raphael as the one "who is set over all disease and every wound of the children of the people" (*1 Enoch* 40.9). In the book of Tobit Raphael is not himself the healer, but is the advisor and instructor to the human character, Tobiah, who will carry out the healing.[7]

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3   See Schüngel-Straumann, Tobit 117-18; Stuckenbruck, Book 262-63.

4   A probable date for *Jubilees* is the mid-second century B.C.E.; the book of Tobit was written close to the same time, possibly just a few decades earlier.

5   See Stuckenbruck, Book 262. Stuckenbruck suggests the absence of the word φάρμακον in G^{I} reflects an ongoing conversation between the recensions reflecting "a mild hesitation to apply medico-magical language to a practice which it otherwise affirms" (p. 269).

6   Schüngel-Straumann, Tobit 151.

7   In the early Christian tradition Origen says that "a particular office is assigned to a particular angel: as to Raphael, the work of curing and healing; to Gabriel, the conduct of wars; to Michael, the duty of attending to prayers and supplications of mortals" (De Principiisi 7: "On the Angels").

The Angel as Guide and Protector

Raphael has come to work, and Tobiah meets him when he goes out to seek a guide to travel with him to Rages (5:4). Raphael identifies himself as the perfect guide and protector. He has been to Media often and knows all the roads, all its plains and even its mountains (5:6, 10 G^(II)). He even knows Gabael, the man who holds the money Tobiah is being sent to recover.

Raphael delivers what he promised: "I will go with him; have no fear. In good health (ὑγιαίνω) we shall leave you, and in good health we shall return to you, for the way is safe (5:17 G^(II)).[8] He fulfills Tobit's prayer for Tobiah and his prediction to Anna: "A good angel will go with him; his journey will be successful, and he will come back in good health" (5:22; see 5:17). He guides Tobiah to Raguel's house in Ecbatana; he brings Tobiah and Sarah back safely to Tobit's house in Nineveh.

The trip is not without its dangers, but Raphael protects his young companion. Tobiah is threatened by a monster fish on the first night (6:3). Raphael, however, does not seize the fish; he orders Tobiah to do it himself: "Take hold of the fish and do not let it get away!" (6:4). Even here he functions as messenger and teacher. The second mortal danger is the demon Asmodeus, who has killed seven of Sarah's bridegrooms on the wedding night. Raguel assumes that Tobiah will be the eighth and digs his grave in advance (8:9-12). But Raphael has given Tobiah instruction regarding the expulsion of the demon afflicting Sarah. Again Tobiah, who is afraid to marry Sarah because of this demon, has forgotten that he already has the means (the fish's heart and liver) to banish it (6:14-15). Raphael, ever patient, reminds him of how to use the fish's innards. Tobiah remembers Raphael's words and acts on them when he enters the bedroom (8:2-3).

The use of foul odors as a means of exorcising demons was common in antiquity.[9] This burning of the fish's innards is also identified as φάρμακον (6:7 G^(II)). Thus what seems to be a more "magical" than "medical" remedy is also recommended by the angel.[10] The consequence of burning the fish's heart and liver, however, may be more specific than simply banishing the demon. Paul-Eugène Dion proposes that what Raphael has been sent to do is to "divorce" (λῦσαι) Asmodeus from

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8   In the G^(II) reading of this verse Raphael twice uses the word ὑγιαίνω, which is significant for this book about healing. The word appears 25 times in G^(II). The English translation used throughout is the *New American Bible.*

9   E.g., Josephus, *Ant.* viii 47; see Stuckenbruck, Book 263, and Schüngel-Straumann, Tobit 118.

10   See Stuckenbruck, Book 263.

Sarah (3:17 G^{II}).[11] Tobiah's comment in 6:15 (G^I) that the demon "loves her" (δαιμόνιον φιλεῖ αὐτήν) strengthen's Dion's suggestion.

In addition to instructing and advising Tobiah regarding the demon, Raphael has his own part to play. He pursues the demon to Upper Egypt and there binds him hand and foot (συνεπόδισεν αὐτὸν ἐκεῖ καὶ ἐπέδησεν παραχρῆμα; 8:3 G^{II}). The binding of demons is common to the tradition about angels. In *1 Enoch* Raphael binds Azazel and throws him into the desert of Dudael (*1 Enoch* 10.4). In Revelation 20, Michael binds the "ancient serpent," the Devil (ἔδησεν αὐτὸν; Rev 20:2).[12]

The Angel as Marriage Broker

In the midst of these instructions about healing, Raphael also reminds Tobiah of his father's injunction to marry a woman of his own family (lit. "house," οἶκος, 6:16; cf. 4:12-13). He knows the woman who is just right for Tobiah: Sarah, daughter of Raguel and Edna (6:11-13)! Raphael insists that this marriage will take place the very night of their arrival in Ecbatana and lists several reasons. First of all, Tobiah is Sarah's closest relative and therefore, according to the custom of endogamy, has the right to marry her. Raguel cannot deny him this right. As the closest relative, Tobiah also has the right to inherit the property of Raguel. Sarah is a desirable bride: "sensible, brave, and very beautiful" (6:12). The most compelling argument is that Sarah was prepared for him before the world existed" (σοὶ αὐτὴ ἡτοιμασμένη ἦν ἀπὸ τοῦ αἰῶνος; 6:18 G^I; compare G^{II}).[13]

Raphael has already suggested that Ecbatana, where Raguel lives, is the true goal of their journey. When Tobiah came seeking a guide to lead him to Rages in order to collect money that Tobit had deposited with Gabael, Raphael announced that Rages was only a two-day journey from Ecbatana (5:6). Raphael intends to speak to Raguel and arrange the marriage (6:13). In this case too, however, Tobiah will take the lead and himself conduct the marriage negotiations with Raguel (7:10-11).

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11   Dion, Raphaël 399-413, as cited in Moore, Tobit 158. See also Ego, Liebt sie 314.

12   See Fitzmyer, Tobit 243; see also Fröhlich, Tobit 65.

13   See Hieke, Endogamy 109.

The Angel as Giver of Encouragement toward Good Works

Throughout the book of Tobit Raphael gives encouragement and strength to the human characters to live faithfully and fully. When Tobit and Sarah pray (3:1-15), both are discouraged, and Raphael is sent in answer to their prayer (3:16). Raphael begins his encouragement at his first meeting with Tobit. Tobit replies to his greeting, "What joy is left for me any more?" and Raphael responds to him with the double injunction, "Take courage" (θάρσει).[14] Between the two injuctions he promises that God has healing in store for him (5:10 G^{II}). When Tobiah is afraid to marry Sarah, Raphael encourages him and promises that not only will Sarah be his wife, but that he will save her (σὺ αὐτὴν σώσεις G^{II}; 6:18). Both Tobit and Tobiah are overcome with fear when Raphael reveals his true identity (12:15-16), but Raphael responds with the typical angelic assurance, "Do not fear" (μὴ φοβεῖσθε; 12:17; see Matt 28:5, 10; Luke 2:10). In all these instances Raphael is encouraging the human characters to take major steps in their lives, confident in God's care for them. In his final speech, Raphael spells out the daily good works that are also demanded of God's faithful people: prayer, fasting, and especially almsgiving (12:8-9).

The Angel as Teacher of Prayer

Raphael is sent in answer to prayer and teaches the human characters to pray. His mission is not to fulfill the wishes of Tobit and Sarah, who have both prayed for death (3:1-15).[15] Instead he restores their wish to live by teaching Tobiah how to heal them.[16] In his instruction to Tobiah about the exorcism on the wedding night, he adds this to the directions concerning the fish innards: Pray together before you go to bed (6:16-18). The demon is expelled not only by foul odors but also by the power of prayer. Before his departure Raphael also exhorts Tobit and Tobiah to thank and praise God for all the good things that God has done for them (12:6). They are not only to praise God privately, but they are also to bear witness of God's goodness before all the living (ἐνώπιον

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14   This encouragement (θάρσει) occurs six times in G^{II} (5:10 twice; 7:17 twice; 8:21; 11:1) and always at critical junctures.

15   In G^{I} their prayer is heard in the presence of "the great Raphael" (τοῦ μεγάλου Ραφαηλ; 3:16).

16   Sabine van den Eynde says that, even though God doesn't do what Tobit and Sarah ask, "the underlying need is solved", Prayer 533.

πάντων τῶν ζώντων; 12:6 G[II]).[17] Raphael's final instruction to them is to "write down all these things that have happened to you" (12:20). Not only are they to pray and proclaim God's goodness before all people, they are also to write down the record so that God may be praised in future generations. Prayer is the driving force of the whole plot.[18] In this book that is full of prayers, the great teacher of prayer is Raphael.

The Angel as "Deceiver"

Raphael seems less than honest when Tobit begins to quiz him regarding his identity (5:11-12). Tobit is concerned that a trustworthy man accompany his son so his questioning is appropriate. Raphael, however, seems to take offense: "Do you need a tribe and a family? Or are you looking for a hired man to travel with your son" (5:12 G[I]). His answer when Tobit persists is: "I am Azariah, son of Hananiah the elder, one of your own kinsmen" (5:13). Is this a blatant lie? This person has been introduced to the reader as the angel Raphael (3:17; 5:4) and the narrator continues to refer to him as "Raphael" (6:11, 14, 19; 7:9; 8:2, 3; 9:1, 5; 11:1, 7)[19] or "the angel" (6:3, 4, 7).[20] Only in chapter 12 does he acknowledge, "I am Raphael" (12:15).[21]

It is necessary to read the text on several levels in order to make sense of this apparent deceit. On a theological level, we resist the idea that angels, messengers of God, might lie. If Raphael were a human character, there would be no problem, but if angels lie, then how can any of their messages be trusted? On a literary level, the ambiguity of Raphael's identity contributes to the rich irony of the book of Tobit. The characters consistently call him "Azariah," sometimes immediately after the narrator has identified him as "Raphael" or "the angel" (6:7, 14; 7:9; 9:1-2; see also 7:1). The audience knows who he is, but the characters do not. Will Soll points out that at a sociological level the questioning provides both Tobit and Raphael "an opportunity to display [their] family values," their concern about good family origins.[22] At the level of the

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17   G[I] adds ὑποδείκνυτε πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις to the next phrase.

18   See van den Eynde, Prayer 533.

19   So G[II]; G[I] does not name Raphael in 6:11, 14, 19; or 8:3.

20   G[I] has in addition 5:6; 6:3, 4, 11, 14, 16; 8:3; 12:5.

21   Schüngel-Straumann, Tobit 110, points out that Raphael's new name, "Yahweh is my help" is "almost identical" to the name Raphael. He also identifies himself as "son of Hananiah," "Yahweh has found favor." She does not read the switching of names as deceit. Fitzmyer, Tobit 188, says that asking whether this is a lie is to miss the point since all is well at the end.

22   Soll, Family 169.

plot, it must be admitted that the freedom of the human characters to act would be compromised if they knew an angel was intimately involved in their lives. The biblical tradition also provides insight. Gideon and Manoah express the common belief that to see the "angel of the Lord face to face" brings death (Judg 6:22-23; Judg 13:21-22; see Gen 32:29, 31). Tobit and Tobiah are struck with fear when Raphael identifies himself as an angel (Tob 12:16). Other biblical angels are reluctant to reveal their names (Gen 32:30; Judg 13:17-18).[23] So angels seem regularly to take on the *persona* of a human being in order to do their work without betraying their identity.[24]

The Angel: Present and Absent

Raphael is both present and absent. He accompanies Tobiah on the journey (6:1; 12:1) and he stands before God (12:15). But he is characterized more by absence than presence. The previous examples demonstrate that the archangel does not take over the action while human beings simply watch. Rather he teaches human beings, in this case Tobiah, how to take care of themselves. Raphael consistently disappears from the action. At the beginning of the journey, "The young man went out and the angel went with him" (6:1-2). Throughout the trip they are mentioned together in conversation. But toward the end of the journey, the reader's focus narrows to Tobiah— "When *he* entered Media and *he* was already approaching Ecbatana"—until "Raphael said to the boy, "Brother Tobiah" (6:10-11 G[II]).[25] This is the young man's journey; the angel is only the companion. When the two arrive at Raguel's house, they are both involved in answering Edna's questions until Tobiah reveals that Tobit is his father. Again the focus narrows to Tobiah and Raphael disappears from view (7:7-8).

Raphael's disappearance from the marriage negotiations has already been mentioned (7:9-13). He reappears only to bind Asmodeus in Egypt (8:3). He goes to Rages at Tobiah's instruction and returns with Gabael and the money (9:1-5), but when they arrive back at the feast, Tobiah greets only Gabael (9:6). Raphael has vanished again.

During the emotional farewells as Tobiah prepares to return to his family, Raphael is not mentioned (10:10-13). Only as they approach

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23   Di Lella, Book 197-206, suggests that Judg 13:2-20 may have provided the ideas of Tobit 12:11-22.

24   See David Noel Freedman as quoted by Moore, Tobit n. 58, p. 25; 183, 192. Freedman sees a core of historicity in the assumed name that Moore does not.

25   G[I], Old Latin, Vulgate, and Aramaic all have a plural verb here.

Nineveh does Raphael again begin to speak, reminding Tobiah of the means by which he will bring about his father's healing (11:1-4, 7-8). As soon as they arrive, however, Raphael disappears once more. His final appearance is in chapter 12, where he gives one final instruction and reveals his identity. Then he vanishes one last time as he ascends to God (12:20-21).[26]

The Angel: Between God and Humanity

Raphael's work is done, not at his own initiative, but solely as an agent of God. He stands before God (12:15) and he walks with human beings. He has presented the prayers of Tobit and Sarah to God (12:12) and his subsequent work is determined by God's command. Raphael is sent (ἀπεστάλη) by God and given a specific commission: to heal (3:17) and to test (12:14). Even though the text seems to indicate that he will be the primary actor in these dealings, in fact, he will be the mediator between God and the human characters in the story. The very meaning of his name indicates that it is God who heals, not Raphael himself. It is certainly also God who tests.[27]

Raphael is thus both an ironic and an ambiguous character. He is an ironic character because he is more than he seems and because his identity is revealed to the audience but not to the other characters in the story. By his presence with these human characters he reveals that God is with them through their suffering, but his disguise also paradoxically reveals that God is hidden from them.

Raphael is an ambiguous character because he exhibits characteristics of a corporeal human being and of a purely spiritual being. His appearance is that of an ordinary human being and does not startle any of the other characters when they encounter him. In fact, they are quite capable of ignoring him. He speaks and issues commands with authority, but none of the characters consider his speech extraordinary. He travels and rests along with Tobiah. He consistently calls Tobiah "brother" (ἀδελφε; 6:11, 13 twice, 16 G^{II}). He and Tobiah bath and wash before sitting down to dinner at Raguel's house (7:9 G^{II}; ἐλούσαντο καὶ ἐπίψαντο). He stays overnight with Gabael (9:5-6). Presumably he runs ahead with Tobiah (προδράμωμεν; 11:3). He does not know everything:

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26 Compare the accounts of the angel's ascent in Judg 13:19-21 and the ascension of Jesus in Acts 1:9-11.

27 The test that Raphael brings is never explicitly defined. Schüngel-Straumann identifies it as to whether Tobit will eat his Pentecost dinner first or bury the dead man (Tobit 157).

He "supposes" (ὑπολαμβάνω) that Tobiah and Sarah will have children (6:18 G^{II} and G^I). He plans to speak to Raguel himself about the marriage (λαλήσω; 6:13 G^{II} and G^I), but Tobiah takes over before he has a chance (7:9-12). He is willing to obey Tobiah (9:5). He seems to be just another man.

But he is not just another man. First of all, he knows too much. Why, when he is asked only about Media, does he specify Rages, the city Tobiah intends to visit (5:6)? Why does he mention only one particular man there (5:6)? Is Gabael the only Jew in Rages? He also mentions Ecbatana, a city known to be important by the readers but not by the characters (5:6).[28] Why is Tobiah not suspicious of this man who knows so much? How does Raphael/Azariah know Tobit's instruction to Tobiah about endogamy (6:16)? Has he been eavesdropping on the conversation between Tobit and Tobiah? How does he know for sure that the wedding will happen that very night (6:16)? How does he know that Sarah has been set aside for Tobiah from eternity (6:18)?[29]

A major question is: Does he eat? In G^I the narrator reports that "they" ate the fish (ἔφαγον; 6:5), whereas in G^{II} only "he" (i.e., Tobiah) eats (ἔφαγεν).[30] At Raguel's house "they" sit down to eat (ἀνέπεσαν δειπνῆσαι; 7:9 G^{II}), but whether Raphael does eat is not stated. Raphael is not present at the wedding feast, since he has gone to fetch Gabael and the money (9:1-6).[31] In chapter 12, however, Raphael states clearly, "Even though you watched me eat and drink, I did not really do so; what you were seeing was a vision" (12:19).[32]

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28   His information is not totally accurate, however. He declares that it is a two-day journey from Ecbatana to Rages (5:6), but it took Alexander's army eleven days of forced march to cover the almost two hundred miles. See Arrian, Anabasis Alexandri 3.20. The discrepancy reveals the author's lack of knowledge, but at the level of the story it is suggestive of Raphael's angelic character and abilities, especially since he traveled with four servants from Ecbatana to Rages, collected the money, and brought Gabael back to the wedding celebration within the fourteen days of the celebration (9:2-6; see 8:20)!

29   This last piece of information is confirmed by Raguel (7:12). How does he know? See Schüngel-Straumann, Tobit 121-122, 127.

30   Ms W of the Old Latin also has the plural verb for "eat," but both Aramaic texts have the singular. The phrase does not occur in the other manuscripts of the Old Latin or in the Vulgate. See Fitzmyer, Tobit 207. Moore, Tobit 200 says the singular is to be preferred because of the Aramaic witness and because of 12:19.

31   Schüngel-Straumann, Tobit 160 implies that Raphael has arranged his absence deliberately. Jacobs, Dinner 131-132, suggests that Raphael's not eating indicates that "he has not become entangled with earthly matters."

32   G^{II} says only "not eat" (οὐκ ἔφαγον οὐθέν), but G^I says "neither eat nor drink" (οὐκ ἔφαγον οὐδὲ ἔπιον). The Aramaic 4Q196 has "I did not drink"; the Vulgate says, "I use invisible food and a drink that cannot be seen by humans" (Fitzmyer, Tobit 297-98).

If the narrator's statements that imply Raphael ate are simply reports of the other characters' perceptions, is one to conclude that the statements that he bathed and visited and walked and ran also based on visions? Is the narrator also deceiving us? Or is Raphael's hiddenness a sign of God's compassion for human weakness?

Raphael: Revelation of God's Hidden Presence and Work

The angel Raphael came to Nineveh to work. He acts primarily as messenger and teacher: informing Tobiah about the medical and magical properties of the fish, instructing him about his obligation to marry Sarah, exhorting Tobit and Tobiah to give praise to God, and telling them to write the story of God's goodness to them. He is also a guide and protector, helping Tobiah "conquer" the threatening fish and exorcise the dangerous demon and guiding Tobiah and Sarah on their journey. Thus he is often compared to the Christian idea of the guardian angel. While there are some similarities, there is one major difference: Raphael's relationship to Tobiah is, according to the story, only temporary but ordinarily guardian angels are understood to accompany people throughout life. Raphael is also a strong support to Tobiah and Tobit, encouraging them to take the necessary risks to lead rich and faithful lives. He truly gives them heart.

Throughout the story Raphael is both a mysterious and an ironic character. He is more than he seems and, until the end, he does not allow the human characters to see his full identity. Thus he appears on occasion to be deceitful when in actuality he simply is telling less than the full truth. He is a bridge between God and humanity and, in order to give the human characters their freedom, sometimes disappears from the action.

In the last analysis, we too, contemplating God's ongoing gift of messengers to us, are led with Tobit and Tobiah to give thanks and acknowledge the wonderful works God still does when the angels of God come among us (see 12:22).

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The Figure of the Angel Raphael
According to his Farewell Address in Tob 12:6-20

BEATE EGO, OSNABRÜCK

In the narration of Tobit, which originated presumably in the Eastern diaspora around 200 BC[1], the figure of the angel Raphael plays a prominent role and is one of the main action performing characters. In the course of this, the passage Tob 12:6-20 is forasmuch of importance as the angel reveals himself in a speech and therewith makes statements about his own character and ministry. After a general overview of the position of the passage Tob 12:6-20 within the narration (1) and of the structure of the angel's speech (2), their main motifs will be discussed in their literary and religious-historical context (3). A summary illustrating the characterisation of Raphael on the basis of Tob 12:6-20, concludes this article (4).

On the whole, it is important to keep in mind that the Tobit narration – aside from various fragments from Qumran – is basically passed on in two Greek recensions, the short version G I and the long version G II. Because the recension G II is considered to be the more original one, being revised and smoothed by G I, G II is used as the basis for the analysis of the text in this article.[2] However, as G I is to be regarded as a textform in its own value, also this recension has to be regarded occasionally in the event of pronounced variations concerning the content of particular passages.[3]

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1   Concerning date and place of composition cf. Ego, Buch 120ff.; Fitzmyer, Tobit 3-57, and others.

2   Concerning the textual history of the book of Tobit cf. Hanhart, Tobit 7ff.; Hanhart, Text 11.19; Wagner, Polyglotte XIII. Concerning the Qumran tradition cf. Fitzmyer, Tobit (DJD XIX) 1-7 et al.

3   Nicklas / Wagner, Thesen 141ff.; Ego, Mehrfachüberlieferung (forthcoming).

1. Raphael's Farewell Address in the Context of the Tobit Narration

Raphael's appearance in the Tobit narration is initialised by a rather long exposition which portrays the suffering of the two protagonists Tobit and Sarah and their devotion to God. Tobit belonging to the tribe of Naphtali, who was deported into the Assyrian exile to Nineveh and there distinguished himself by deeds of charity towards his people, loses his eyesight. After a quarrel with his wife Hanna, who taunts him, he is in such a desperate state that he beseeches God in an invocation to redeem him and to let him die (Tob 1:3-3:6). A second scene is constructed parallel to this, which at first does not seem to have anything to do with Tobit's fate. It is the story of Sarah in Ecbatana, who having lost already seven husbands in their respective bridal nights due to the demon Asmodeus and who has now to endure her maid's scorn and derision. She also turns to God in her distress and asks for early liberation by death (Tob 3:7-15).

Unexpectedly, the angel Raphael now enters the scene: Tobit's and Sarah's grievance has come before God, whereupon he sends the angel Raphael to heal Sarah and Tobit (Tob 3:16). These elements, namely the story of Tobit and the story of Sarah as well as the mission of the angel, are now put into relation: Tobit decides to send out his son Tobiah to claim a sum of money which he has deposited with a certain Gabael in Rages on his former travels. Tobiah looks for a travel companion and finds Raphael. He of course stays incognito and appears as the young man Azarias. After a wisdom speech of the old Tobit (Tob 4) and receiving many blessings from Tobiah's parents, the two of them start their long journey to Gabael. When crossing a river, the angel Raphael alias Azarias instructs Tobiah to catch a fish and to keep its bile, liver and heart as pharmaceuticals. Besides this, he tells him that Sarah, the daughter of his relatives Raguel and Edna, whom they are going to visit, is his intended bride; it thereby becomes evident that Tobiah already knows about Sarah's fate and her seven husbands. But Raphael comforts him. After their arrival in Ecbatana, Tobiah asks for Sarah's hand in marriage; as he is able to banish the demon Asmodeus with incense created by burning the fish's liver and heart on Azarias's instructions, the wedding night proceeds without any complications. During the fortnight of their wedding feast Raphael-Azarias claims the money from Gabael in Rages. Tobiah, knowing that his parents are concerned about him due to his long absence, thus bids farewell to his parents-in-law together with his newly-wed wife Sarah. When Tobiah and Sarah reach Ninive, the joy of Tobiah's parents is overwhelming.

Tobiah manages to heal his father's blindness with the fish bile, where-upon a great feast is held (Tob 5-11). Finally, Azarias reveals himself as Raphael and vanishes (12). With Tobit's great eschatological hymn to Jerusalem (Tob 13:1-14:1) the main part of the story ends. The book concludes with an epilogue which tells about Tobit's last words and his death as well as disclosing information concerning Tobiah's further life until his death (Tob 14:2-15).

2. Raphael's Farewell Address – A First Approach

Within these proceedings the passage Tob 12:6-20, in which Raphael reveals himself at the end of the narration, now gains special impor-tance. For here it is not only the narration which talks about the angel, but also the angel speaks of himself – on a literary level – in the first person und hence, he unveils his own character which has been dis-guised for the protagonists so far. As Bianca Schnupp has pointed out in her dissertation on the concepts of the Guardian Angel, this scene can be generally classified as an "angeloophty". According to Bianca Schnupp, the distinguishing feature of the angeloophty consists in the angel becoming directly visible for certain men because he appears in their world. This distinguishes it from the unspecific talk of an angel's appearance, the angelophany.[4] In the centre of traditional angeloophty, as it occurs for example in Gen 16, Gen 21, Num 22, Judg 6 and Judg 13, lies the narrative account of the divine word, by which God's help is granted to certain people in their immediate presence. In his account of Raphael's self-revelation, the author of the Book of Tobit has recourse to existing topoi but deals very freely with this form.[5] Now, the revela-tion of Raphael is in the centre of the scene; the aspect of divine inter-vention does not seem directly relevant for the present but only in a collateral way when God's saving action is resorted to retrospectively.

To finalise the act of salvation and healing in the Tobit narration, the angel addresses the following words to Tobit and his son Tobiah before he returns to the heavenly world:

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4   Schnupp, Schutzengel 92-96.
5   Schnupp, Schutzengel 95.

[6]   "Praise God and acknowledge before all the living the good things that He has done for you, so as to praise Him and sing hymns to his name. Declare God's word to all people with due honor; be not slow to acknowledge Him.

Call to glorification of God

[7]   It is right to conceal a king's secret, and to make manifest and acknowledge the acts of God with due honor.

Do good, and evil will not come upon you.

Ethical instructions

[8]   Prayer with fidelity and almsgiving with righteousness are a better good than wealth with wickedness. It is better to give alms than to hoard gold.

[9]   For almsgiving saves one from death; it wipes out all sin. Those who give alms will enjoy a full life;

[10]   but those who commit sin and do wrong are their own worst enemies.

[11]   Now I shall tell you the whole truth and shall not conceal any detail from you. I have already told you, when I said, that it is right to conceal a king's secret, and to make manifest the acts of God in honorable fashion.

Announcement of revelation

[12]   Well, when you prayed as did Sarah too, it was I who brought the record of your prayers into the glorious presence of the Lord; and likewise when you buried the dead.

Retrospection: The angel's actions in the past

[13]   And when you did not hesitate to get up and leave your dinner to go and bury the dead,

[14]   then I was sent to you to test you. God sent me at the same time to heal you and Sarah, your son's bride.

[15]   I am Raphael, one of the seven angels who stand in attendance and enter into the glorious presence of the Lord."[6]

Raphael's self-portrayal

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6   Cited according to the translation of Fitzmyer, ad. loc.

Simply one look at this structure shows the dramatic composition of this speech: Raphael begins with a request to sound praise to God and then goes on with ethical exhortations. Not until then does he talk about his own actions in retrospect. This retrospective view also contains – as will be pointed out in the following – motifs which do not explicitly occur in the narration itself. Only subsequent to this review which shows Raphael's contribution to the events, the actual self-revelation takes place in which he presents himself as one of the seven Throne Angels.[7]

After the self-revelation the reaction of the addressed follows, they are frightened and fall onto their faces (Tob 12:16). After that, Raphael comforts Tobit and Tobiah and continues his speech, in which he emphasises the praise and worship of God once more. Finally, Raphael ascends into the heavenly world, with Tobit and Tobiah praising God and thanking him for his works and for the angel's appearance (Tob 12:21f). Thus, we find the following structure:

[17] but Raphael said to them, "Do not be afraid; peace be with you! Praise God at all times!	Greeting of peace; call to fearlessness and glorification of God
[18] When I was with you, it was not owing to any favor of mine that I was with you, but to the will of God.	Retrospection: Raphael as God's messenger
So praise Him and sing to Him all your days.	Call to glorification of God
[19] Take note that I did not eat (or drink) anything; what you saw was a vision.	Retrospect: angel's not-eating
[20] Now then praise the Lord on this earth and acknowledge God. Look, I am ascending to the One who sent me. Write down all these things that have happened to you."[8]	Call to glorification of God and to written tradition of events

One look at the composition of Raphael's speech[9] reveals that the motif of the glorification of God continues throughout the whole speech like a cantus firmus. As Rafael applies this motif in the first speech and final-

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7   Concerning the character of this speech cf. Schüngel-Straumann, Tobit 155 ; Schnupp, Schutzengel 95.
8   Cited according to the translation of Fitzmyer, ad. loc.
9   A similar outline can also be found in Schnupp, Schutzengel 87. However, Tob 12,18f. is generally titled "explanation of his mission and appearance".

ises the second one with the same element, it forms a framework around Raphael's introduction of himself.[10] When regarding the passage more closely, it becomes evident that Raphael withdraws; it is not his character as such that is involved but God's efficient intervention in favour of his protégés.[11]

3. Central Motifs of Raphael's Farewell Address

3.1. Raphael as Throne Angel

The ending of the self-revelation exposes very plainly, that Raphael – together with six further angels – belongs to a group of angels who are exceptionally close to God in his heavenly world. At the same time he uses a form of self-introduction which is usually found when God introduces himself (cf. e.g. Exod 20:2; Deut 5:6).[12] When he is depicted as a being who enters into the glorious presence of the Lord, it becomes clear that Rafael belongs to the group of the Throne Angels. This depiction shows that here a reception of the concept of the divine council has occurred – members of this council are beings who surround God eulogising and offering subsidiary advice. This motif has to be regarded as one of the most central angelological conceptions of the Hebrew Bible. In the first place Isaiah's vision is to be mentioned here in which he sees seraphs, or Ezekiel's vision depicting the חיות who carry the throne.[13]

Certainly, specific distinctions between previous biblical traditions and this passage become apparent when the initially uncharacteristic term ἄγγελος appears for the beings of this assembly of angels, which is semantically equivalent to Hebrew מלאך. For in the biblical tradition the term מלאך is not connected with the conception of the divine council but characterises God's messenger instead. He appears before men in human disguise and conveys God's message to them.[14]

Whereas in biblical tradition there is not any hierarchy of these beings within the divine council and, as a general rule, they are not named

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10   See also Schnupp, Schutzengel 88.
11   Cf. Fitzmyer, Tobit 285-300; Moore, Tobit 265-275.
12   Schüngel-Straumann, Tobit 157; Schnupp, Schutzengel 90.
13   Cf. Neef, Gottes; cf. also Mach, Entwicklungsstadien 16-36; Krauss, Engel 23-29.
14   Concerning the biblical concept of messengers cf. Gen 16:7ff; 21:17-21; 18; 22:11-15; 31:11; Num 22:22-35; Judg 13; 2Kgs 1:3.5. A mingling of both concepts can be grasped predominantly in later biblical traditions; cf. Mach, Entwicklungsstadien 52-56.

as individual characters[15], here an elevated group of heavenly beings is introduced when in this case Raphael is named as belonging to a group of seven angels altogether.

As such Tob 12:12 is one of the early testimonies of an angel heptade; parallels are also found in the Enoch tradition; Greek Enoch 20:7 as well as Ethiopian Enoch 81:5[16] also talk of seven angels; four are named in ethEn 9:1; 40:2f.9. Apart from Raphael also Michael, Uriel and Gabriel are mentioned by name (ethEn 9:1; in 40:9 Phanuel instead of Uriel), additionally also Raguel and Sariel (ethEn 20; the Greek version names the absent seventh one, Remiel).[17] These angels are entrusted with specific tasks and fields: As in the Tobit narration Raphael is appointed over „all illness and over all menace of human kind" (40:9f.) resp. over the spirits of men (22:3); Michael is known as the angel of Israel (20:5; 22:3), Gabriel presides over all powers (40:9), resp. is appointed over Paradise, snakes and cherubs (20:7) and Phanuel presides over the penance and hope of all those who inherit eternal life (40:9).

3.2. Raphael's Retrospection regarding his Mission

An important part within Raphael's introduction of himself is his retrospect to the recent actions of salvation.

a) Raphael as Mediator of Prayers

When inquiring after the specific function which Raphael is supposed to fulfil in the divine presence in the heavenly realms, the so-called short version Tob 12:15 G I brings up an additional aspect. Here it says:

> 15 I am Raphael, one of the seven holy angels who present the prayers of the saints and enter into the glorious presence of the Holy One.[18]

Thus, Raphael characterises himself as a mediator of prayers. The conception of prayers being mediated is also found in the context of Tob 12:12, in the self-introduction and the angel's retrospect in both versions; in addition to this it occurs in Tob 3:15 G I, when Tobit's and

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15   Names of angels do only appear in the later texts of the Hebrew Bible, cf. Dan 8:16; 9:21 (Gabriel) and Dan 10:13.21; 12:1 (Michael).

16   Cf. EthEn 87:2f.; 90:21.

17   Concerning archangels cf. the excursus in Nickelsburg, Enoch 207; the term first occurs in grEn 9B,1:4; 20:7.

18   Quoted according to the translation of Fitzymyer, ad. loc.

Sarah's prayers do not directly reach God but are conveyed to him by Raphael.[19]

This motif of prayers being mediated by angels as it occurs in the Book of Tobit is attested in other texts of Ancient Judaism, too. The presumably earliest preserved piece of evidence is found in the Book of Watchers in Ethiopian Enoch, which is dated to about the end of the 3rd century BC. For in ethEn 9:1 it is told that from heaven the four angels, Michael, Uriel, Raphael and Gabriel see all the blood that has been shed after the mingling of the watcher angels with human women and after all the unrighteousness that has been committed on earth. After that it says:

> 1 Then Michael and Sariel and Raphael and Gabriel looked down from the sanctuary of heaven upon the earth and saw much bloodshed upon the earth. All the earth was filled with the godlessness and violence that had befallen it.
>
> 2 And entering in, they said to one another, „The earth, devoid (of inhabitants), raises the voice of their cries to the gates of heaven.
>
> 3 And now to <us>, the holy ones of heaven, the souls of men make suit, saying,
>
> 'Bring in our judgement to the Most High,
> and our destruction before the glory of the majesty,
> before the Lord of all lords in majesty' (ethEn 9,1-3).[20]

The angels report on the injustice on earth and on man's grievance to God. Thereupon, God reveals the truth about the watchers and their children and announces the future blessing that shall be imposed on earth (ethEn 9:4-11:2).[21] Another example for the conception of prayers being mediated is found in ApocBaruch 11:4-9, "where Prince Michael comes down to receive the prayers of human beings and to present their deeds in the presence of God".[22]

b) Further Motifs: The Angel's Temptation and Presence

Furthermore, Raphael's retrospection contains additional narrative motifs. But these are rather difficult to understand, particularly as they cannot be found in the actions that the narration spoke about before. In

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19   Thus, a consequent concentration on the motif of prayer mediating takes place in G I; cf. explicitly Ego, Mehrfachüberlieferung.

20   Quoted according to the translation of Nickelsburg, Enoch 202.

21   Concerning concepts of mediating prayers of angels, which is to be distinguished from intercession, cf. ethHen 99:3; 104:1; grBar 11:4; TestDan 6:2; further indications in the excursus of Schnupp, Schutzengel 46-48; cf. Davidson, Angels 309-313.

22   Fitzmyer, Tobit 294.

the course of this, there are distinct differences between the two text forms:

Long version G II 12:12-15	Short version G I 12:12-15
12 Well, when you prayed, as did Sarah too, it was I who brought the record of your prayers into the glorious presence of the Lord; and likewise when you buried the dead.	12 Well, when you prayed, as did your bride Sarah too, it was I who brought the record of your prayers into the presence of the Holy One; when you buried the dead, I was likewise present with you.
13 And when you did not hesitate to get up and leave your dinner to go and bury the dead,	13 And when you did not hesitate to get up and leave your dinner to go off and bury the dead, your good deed did not escape me, but I was with you.[23]
14 then I was sent to you to test you.	

Following the motif of Raphael acting as a mediator, Tob 12:12 G II formulates "and likewise when you buried the dead" in a syntactically rather subsequent way. Being read in the context of the whole verse this change imposes several questions: Did Rafael deliver a prayer of Tobit to God when he buried the dead? Or did he convey the remembrance of these good deeds? Both possibilities are conceivable but can not be verified with the help of the text. Raphael's statement about himself seems to be likewise unexpected in Tob 12:14 G II, according to which the angel has already been sent to Tobit to test him when he was leaving his meal to bury the dead. As J. Fitzmyer has pointed out, this test probably means Tobit's blindness.[24] Both statements surprise when considered in connexion with the overall characteristic style as the angel Raphael is only introduced to the action in the context of Tobit's and Sarah's lamentations in Tob 3:16; Tob 1:18f. and Tob 2,2ff. mention the burial of the dead yet not Raphael.

    In both cases, curiously, G I speaks more cautiously of the angel merely being present at the burial and – thus v. 13 – this good deed does not remain hidden. The abstruse statement in 12:12 G II ending resp. the motif of the testing, however, is missing. Even when the narration does not explicitly talk of the presence of the angel in 1:18f. and 2:2f., this version still does not seem to be as unexpected as version G II,

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23   Quoted according to the translation of Fitzmyer.
24   Fitzmyer, Tobit 295.

as it is quite obvious that the angel has become aware of Tobit's actions in some way. In any case, with this motif, which is followed by v. 14 and the information of the angel's mission to heal the protagonists, the act-consequence correlation comes to the fore.

c) Raphael as the God-Sent Healer

Raphael is the God-sent healer – this being shown by the progress of his retrospect in Tob 12:14. In this, Raphael's speech converges with the beginning of the Tobit narration, namely Tob 3:16f., where it says:

"Then Raphael was sent to cure both of them: Tobit, by removing the white films from his eyes that he might see with them God's light; and Sarah, daughter of Raguel, by giving her marriage to Tobiah, son of Tobit, and freeing her from the wicked demon Asmodeus."

This fact is also displayed in the angel's name, which can be translated literally as "God heals". In the context of the speech this short reference to Raphael's occupation as a healer seems sufficient. Few words refer to the narration of the demon's banishment and the healing of blind Tobit. At the same time attention is directed to the fact that Raphael's ministry for the two suffering people is not primarily determined by spectacular rescue operations. Rather Raphael rescues blind Tobit and molested Sarah in the way that he constantly instructs Tobiah as to the right actions of healing and helping on their journey – he orders to catch the fish; he explains how to deal with it to produce the curative ointment and the incense, he gives instructions where Tobiah is supposed to stay overnight in Ecbatana and he also tells him that he should marry Sarah; eventually, he also instructs him to produce the ointment for his father's eyes and to apply it. The angel, who appears disguised in a human shape, thus occurs as a competent „wise" counsellor.[25]

As already mentioned above, Ethiopian Enoch also passes on this aspect of Raphael, who is appointed to deal with "all illness and all menace of human kind" (ethEn 40:9f). Apart from that, the same relation of the aspects of instruction and healing is to be found in the Book of Jubilees 10:10-14, when angels instruct Noah about the usage of medical herbs.

In addition, one has to refer to the connexion of wisdom elements and angels in general as it can be found elsewhere in biblical and early Jewish literature. Thus, already 2Sam 14:17 speaks of an angel who knows about good and bad; the divine council (as 1Kgs 22:19-20 and Isa

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25 In particular B. Schnupp has called attention to this aspect of the Raphael figure; cf. Schnupp, Schutzengel 67-72,97.

6:8 show) also holds the function of acting as an advisory assembly.[26] Furthermore, especially early Jewish literature in Qumran is familiar with the motif of the divine council's wisdom. Hence, the Sabbath Songs from Qumran bear names such as "the elim of knowledge" (אלי דעת - 4Q400 2 1; 4Q403 1 i 31), "the angels of knowledge" (דעת מלאכי - 11Q ShirSabb 2-1-9 5), or "spirits of the knowledge of truth and righteousness" (רוחי דעת אמת וצדק - 4Q405 19 4)[27]. In the Susanna narration, an angel conveys the spirit of perception (πνεῦμα συνέσεως) to Daniel (Dan LXX 13:44), who then substantially should contribute to Susanna's rescue. Michael Mach, who collocated the crucial traditions on the angel's wisdom, elaborates on this: "One could interpret this verse to the effect that the angel receives this spirit like an object in order to transfer it to Daniel; however within the scope of the tradition of the divine council's wisdom it is more obvious to think of a knowledge which belongs to the angels and in which Daniel may participate."[28]

d) The Angel Eating

Finally, in his second speech Raphael briefly points to the motif, according to which he did not ingest food. When Tobiah saw him eating, this was only an outward impression. This statement corrects and retrospectively explains the fact that Tob 6:6 G I explicitly speaks of Tobiah and Raphael having eaten the fish which was caught from the Tigris. In the context of this passage, the motif, which is put in rather abruptly, does also seem to serve the purpose of affirming the credibility of Raphael's statements. For it is the angels' feature par excellence that they do not ingest food. An equivalent motif occurs e.g. in the Testament of Abraham (4:9-11) as well when Michael does not take in any food; to disguise his identity God sends a spirit who consumes food so that Abraham is misled. In JosAs 15:9 the angel eats a honeycomb which he initially has created himself.[29]

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26   Concerning the divine council Neef, Gottes 17; see also Wacker, Wissen.
27   Cf. also the spirits of knowledge (רוחות דעת) 1QH XI 22/23 (according to older numeration 1QH III 22/23).
28   Mach, Entwicklungsstadien 140 [*translation mine*].
29   Concerning this topic cf. Schnupp, Schutzengel, 90; cf. also Ginzberg, Legends V 236, N.B. 143.

2.3. Raphael as Teacher of Glorification and of Mercy

a) Call to Glorification of God

The appeal to glorify God is the golden thread of Raphael's whole speech.[30] This appeal forms, as already explained above, the speech's anacrusis and at the same time its aim as well. If Raphael sees himself as an instrument of divine acts of mercy he now stresses which consequence this bears: It is God exclusively who should be praised. Doxology is the only appropriate form of reacting to the experiences.

The instruction to praise God is of course not a surprising element, but the angel confirms an ethical act with this resp. a behaviour that the protagonists already showed before in the course of the action. The appeal to praise and worship is a constituent part of a lesson of life which is taught by the aged Tobit to his son Tobiah before he departs (4:19). After Tobiah is wondrously spared during his wedding night, Raguel and his family intone a doxology to God's mercy (8:15-17). Finally, subsequent to the reunion with his son and to his healing, the aged Tobit says a prayer praising God for his mercy (11:14.15).

Also the first meeting with his daughter-in-law leads to a short glorification of God, who led Sarah to the house of Tobit (11:17).

However, when Raphael calls upon praising God once again after his speech, this is not a mere repetition of such elements. This call can only be seen on the background of his self-revelation und hence, he wants to stress that it really is God exclusively who should be praised, but not himself who has acted only apparently on Tobit, Tobiah and Sarah.

b) The Angel's Ethical Exhortations

In the context of the passage Tob 12:6-20 the ethical exhortation seems slightly unexpected; again this is a distinguishing feature of an angeloophty within the Tobit narration.[31] Raphael's words resemble sentences of wisdom, as they can be found in Tobit's testament in Tob 4:6-11.16; the topic is revisited in Tobit's legacy in Tob 14:8.9.11. With terms like "fidelity" (αλήθεια), "almsgiving" (ἐλεημοσύνη) and "righteousness" (δικαιοσύνη) (Tob 12:8) the central themes of the Book of Tobit are named.[32]

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30   Refering to this aspect is also Schnupp, Schutzengel 88.
31   Schnupp, Schutzengel 95.
32   Schnupp, Schutzengel 89. Altogether, these instructions remind of utterances as they are found in the Book of Proverbs or Jesus Sirach (thus for example Prov 10:2; Prov 11:4; Prov 25:2; 28:6; Sir 29:10-13; Sir 40:24). Cf. for these elements of wisdom in the Book of Tobit Rabenau, Studien 28-65.

As Bianca Schnupp has pointed out, these fit in directly with the characteristic style of the angel's speech. First of all, Raphael remembers the good deeds which God has done to Tobit and his family. In turn, this fact motivates to praise and to appropriate behaviour. Father and son are requested to do good in v. 7, and v. 8 makes clear how to perform it. The motif of giving alms is also a hint for Tobit and Tobiah to give the young man Azarias an appropriate wage for his companionship on the journey. Still, as it resonates implicitly, it seems better to spend one's wealth for people in need.

4. Summary: The Figure of Raphael in Tob 12:6-20

When finally asking how the figure of Raphael is characterised by this valedictory, several aspects may be discussed. On the one hand, one has to refer to the informative character of Raphael's speech as he gives an account of his being and his ministry. On the other hand, there is also an indirect characterisation of Rapahel going on, for the speech in itself is of a performative character and may be described as a "speech act".

First let us consider the informative level: Raphael characterises himself as an angel belonging to that circle of seven angels who have access even to God in his heavenly world. In the course of this he functions as a prayer mediator and as God's messenger who was sent to heal Tobit and Sarah. In proportion to the narration itself the reader only gains scarce information concerning the angel's actions. Especially the issue of the means to heal is disregarded. Apart from that, within his speech, the angel refers to the motifs of temptation and his presence, which do not fit into the narration's overall characteristic style.

More meaningful than the merely informative contents of the speech however, is the fact that here the figure of Raphael is characterized by his speech act. His entire speech in its characteristic style reveals Raphael as a kind of wisdom teaching figure. In his review, Raphael makes accessible to the protagonists the comprehension of the events' transcendent character, when he emphasises that he is an angel who was sent by God. Raphael thus shows the rescued how they can interpret the events that have befallen them and how they can integrate these into their horizon of experience and understanding. God himself is the invisible hand which affected everything. Not his own goodness brought Raphael to Tobiah and Sarah but the will of God and he acted upon His behalf. The quintessence of Raphael's message is: Everthing that has happened is not to be credited to him but is exclusively God's

initiative. Raphael is nothing more but an instrument by which God sends his healing to mankind.

Surely, to the addressees of this narration these connexions are not new for they have already been informed about the character of Raphael resp. of the young man Azarias by the narrator at the beginning of the tale in Tob 3:16 as well as in Tob 5. In a text-pragmatic way, within the story's overall concept the angel's speech is a condensation of the theological content of the narration. This theological content gives priority to God's care for his people which is expressed by his messenger. Moreover, the appellative note of Raphael's speech clearly shows that the angel does not want to merely reveal his true being but to refer to the transcendent character of the past events. As Raphael directly addresses Tobit and Tobiah with his calls, it becomes evident that he also wants to show, which conclusions the rescued should draw from the experience of their rescue. Among the charitable-ethical stimuli the doxological component of his message gains special meaning. With this, the angel implicitly reduces his own importance and emphasises once more that he only holds the commission of being a messenger. The importance of the glorification of God, which was also mentioned elsewhere within the Tobit narration, is now revealed in its entirety. The reaction of the addressed becomes clear in any case when, after the end of the angel's speech, it is said: "When they got up, they were no longer able to see him. They continued to praise God and to sing to His honour; they acknowledged God for those mighty deeds of His and were amazed how an angel of God appeared to them" (Tob 12:21f.).

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An Archangel's Theology
Raphael's Speaking about God and the Concept of God in the Book of Tobit

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The statements the angel Raphael makes on God[1] are tied up in the entire book of Tobit and, even if they give a special emphasis, they are part of the entire message about God's acting. That is why the reflections below will be made by the following steps: After settling some important preliminary problems (1.) we will deal with the following subjects: God's names / designations and epithets (2.1.) and God's characteristics (2.2.), God's ways of acting (2.3.), ways of acting before God (2.4.), and finally Raphael's speaking about God in the context of the theological concept in the book of Tobit (3.)[2].

1. General Preliminary Problems

Whoever wants to put forward instances of usage, will inevitably come across the problem of textual tradition. The Aramaic fragments discovered in Qumran (4Q196.197.198.199) and the Hebrew fragment (4Q200) are the earliest evidence dated to the 1st century BC. Although textual remains – up to 42% of the Aramaic and about 13% of the Hebrew versions – have been discovered, less than 20% of the text are in hand when you have recourse to these fragments. – Tobit has been completely preserved in Greek; there are two significant, though differing versions: the longer and probably earlier one[3] found in the Codex Sinaiticus[4]

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1 Passages in the Old Testament are considered in the light of the LXX, Hebrew words and referrences – if any – only in the second place. English translation as a rule according to the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) 1989.

2 To my surprise there is so far no detailed investigation into the theological concepts of GII or GI; there are even fewer studies comparing the theological concepts of GII and GI. Therefore the research preparing the present study was informative; the subject, however, cannot be treated entirely here.

3 Cf. Hanhart, Text 27-39; Rabenau, Studien 6-7; Fitzmyer, Tobit VI-VII.

4 In this version 4:7-18 and 13:6-10 are missing.

(GII), and GI[5] the shorter recension which is more often referred to and forms the basis of the old translations[6] – excepting Vetus Latina.

1.1. Occurrences of κύριος and θεός

In 26 (GII[7]) viz. 21 (GI[8]) verses in the book of Tobit we find God's name κύριος and in 37 (GII[9]) viz. 35 (GI[10]) verses it is θεός – the number is still bigger because in some verses the words occur more than once. The usage of God's names in GII and GI comparatively often differ from one another in one and the same passage. We just refer to δεσπότης in passing.

Most passages use *either* κύριος *or* θεός, in some passages[11] they are combined with each other. Always κύριος takes the first position, θεός follows either as a genitive object or as an apposition.

In 13:4 God's names appear in parallelism[12]. The God invoked in 13:1 (θεός) is interpreted in 13:4 as αὐτὸς ἡμῶν κύριος, αὐτὸς θεός ἡμῶν, αὐτὸς πατὴρ ἡμῶν and αὐτὸς θεὸς εἰς πάντας τοὺς αἰῶνας. – This suggests that there are variants of emphasis, but no differences that would exclude one another.

1.2. The Protagonists and the Literary Frame

Several personages are the protagonists within this story of a family: the main character Tobit, his wife Hanna and their son Tobias, in distant Rages their future daughter-in-law Sara and her parents Raguel and Edna. As a companion sent by God the angel Raphael appears. – Direct speech is prevailing. Excepting only a few instances[13], God's names

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5   The so called version GIII, which is attested in the minuscules 106.107 [44.125.610] will not be taken into account.

6   Codex Vaticanus, Codex Alexandriunus, the Syriac, Sahidic, Ethiopian, Armenean and Vulgata-translations are to be mentioned.

7   Cf.2::12ff; 3:2f,6,10,15; 4:5,19,21; 5:20; 6:18; 7:11f,17; 8:4; 9:6; 10:11,13f; 12:12,15,20; 13:4,7,15f; 14:15; 1 Ma, 2:53; 8:30; 9:25.

8   Cf. l. 2:2,12ff; 3:2,11f,14; 4:5,19; 5:20; 7:17; 8:4,7; 10:13; 12:22; 13:4,7,11,13,15; 14:2,6f.

9   Cf. 1:4,12; 3:11,16f; 4:21; 5:4,10,17; 7:13; 8:5,15; 9:6; 11:14ff; 12:6f,11,14,17f,20,22; 13:2,4,18; 14:2,4-8,10,15.

10   Cf. 1:12; 3:11; 4:5,7,14,19,21; 5:17; 6:18; 7:12; 8:5,15; 10:11,14; 11:14,16f; 12:6f,11,14,17f, 20,22; 13:2,4,9,13,16,18; 14:2,4ff.

11   Cf. in GI 3:11; 4:5; 13:13; 14:2,6,7.

12   The sentences in 12:22 which follow one another, but say different things, cannot be seen as parallel with regard to the usage of the names of God.

13   Cf. 10:14; 11:16; 12:22; 14:2, that is 4 occurrences.

occur in speeches and prayers. You find κύριος in the words of Tobit[14], Tobias[15], Edna[16], Sara (3:14) and Hanna (5:20). Tobit[17], Raguel[18], Raphael[19] as well as Tobias (8:5) and Sara (3:11) talk about θεός. – In GI Raguel and especially Raphael never talk about κύριος, whereas Hanna and Edna never mention θεός in this tradition.

If one arranges the occurrences of θεός according to their frequency, Tobit (25 times) and Raphael (10 times) hold the top position; Tobias (once), Sara (once) and Raguel (thrice) use it five times altogether.

2. Theology in the Book of Tobit

In the book of Tobit God's names "Lord" and "God" balance one another. It is a question whether θεός and κύριος are (abstract) designations or names? – Without going to answer this question right now, we mention the problem once again which results from the frequent difference of "Lord" and "God" between GII and GI.

2.1. God's Names and Epithets

In the following we will focus on *king*[20] and *father*. The book of Tobit is part of the late Biblical Greek tradition. That is why our presentation of the most significant themes will throughout refer to this setting.

2.1.1. Lord / God and King in the LXX Tradition

The combination of *God's names* and *king* is found several times in LXX. In this combination κύριος[21] is used more often than θεός[22]. Even though

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14   Cf. 2:2; 3:2,11; 4:5,19; 13:4,7,11,13,15; 14:6,7, that is 12 occurrences.

15   Cf. 8:4,7, that is 2 occurrences.

16   Cf. 7:17; 10:13 (twice), altogether 3 occurrences.

17   Cf. 1:12; 4:5,7,14,19,21; 5:17; 11:14,16,17; 13:2,4,9,13,16,18; 14:2,4,5(twice),6(twice), 7(twice), that is 25 occurrences.

18   Cf. 7:12; 8:15; 10:11, altogether thrice.

19   Cf. 6:18; 12:6 (thrice),7,11,14,17,18,20, that is 10 occurrences.

20   Cf. Skemp, Adelphos.

21   Cf. 2Macc 1:24; 3:35; Isa 6:1,5; 33:22; 41:21; 43:15; Jer 28:57; Zech 14:16f; Ps 5:3; 23:8,10; 28:10; 46:3; 83:4; 94:3; 97:6; Sir 51:1; and besides 3Macc 2:2; 5:35; Odes 14:10; PsS 2:32; 5:19; 17:1,34,46.

22   Cf. 1Sam 12:12 ambiguous; Esth 4:17[6]; Jdt 9:12; 2Macc 1:24; 6:2; Ps 5:3; 43:5; 46:7f; 67:25; 73:12; 83:4; 144:1.

the motif of YHWH's kingship is old, the greater part of its textual oc-
currences is late. This is due to the historical background. By opposing
"Lord" versus "king" one touches basic issues of social and religious
origin in the late period of the Old Testament. The profane ruler, βασιλεύς,
is often addressed as κύριος and also understood himself as *lord* [23].

The general use of the form of addressing the ruler found expres-
sion in the book of Judit: the king (ὁ βασιλεύς) is at the same time the
lord of the universe (ὁ κύριος πάσης τῆς γῆς; Jdt 6,4; cf. 2,5; 11,4). *Nebu-
chadnezzar* is mentioned – he is a cipher meaning the Seleucid kings.
This usage is also found in the translation of the Hebrew book of Es-
ther: 6:1[LXX]; cf. 4:8; 10:3. The Greek gradually developed extensions of
the text, found in the additional material, have a Seleucid background.
But there usage has been changed, since *lord* and *king* are no longer
parallel, but instead contrasting elements are intended. Esth 10:3c[24]
opposes King Ahasuerus/Ἀρταξέρξης to the LORD (κύριος; Esth 10:3f.)
who is explicitly identified as θεός (Esth 10:3f). In the meantime "lord"
has come to designate the only "king" understood as God in the Bible
as he is testified to in the invocations in prayer: " Lord, God, King, God
of Abraham / κύριε ὁ θεὸς ὁ βασιλεὺς ὁ θεὸς Αβρααμ"; Esth 4:17-18, and Esth
4:17b: Lord, lord, king ruling everything κύριε κύριε βασιλεῦ πάντων
κρατῶν. In these passages κύριος and βασιλεύς describe the powerful po-
sition on the one hand, and the divinity (θεός) on the other.

2.1.2. God as King in Tobit

Tobit participates in the theological concept described above; it is re-
markable, however, that there are significant differences between GII
and GI.

2.1.2.1. The "*theo-*"logicalization in GI (Tob 10:14)

Tob 10:14 says that Tobias returns home after he has accomplished the
purpose of his journey: "Tobias parted from Raguel with happiness
and joy, praising (εὐλογῶν) the Lord (τῷ κυρίῳ) of heaven and earth (τοῦ
οὐρανοῦ καὶ τῆς γῆς), King (τῷ βασιλεῖ) over the universe (τῶν πάντων)[25],
because he had made his journey a success." So according to GII Tobias

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23 Cf., even if rarely used, the term δεσπότης for God; cf. GII: 3:14; 8:17; GI: 8:17.

24 Numeration according to Rahlfs, Septuaginta.

25 NRSV formulates the point not clearly enough: "The Lord of heaven and earth, King
    over all."

praises and thanks the *lord* (τῷ κυρίῳ) of heaven and earth. The focus on power is intensified by the parallel "king" (βασιλεύς). – GI only resumes the first part of the parallelism: "After this Tobias departed praising (εὐλογῶν) God (τὸν θεόν)." – GI accentuates the theological level: Tobias thanks God (τὸν θεόν). The hint at creation (heaven and earth) is left out as well as the one at the *king of the universe*. It is an abstract, theological statement that remains.

2.1.2.2. Lord and King (Tob 13:7)

The praising song in Tob 13:1-14:1 has a bi-partite structure: 13:1-8 and 13:9-18; 14:1: The first stanza brings God into focus. Two reasons are given why he is praiseworthy and commendable: He punishes evil-doing, and rewards the good. This applies to the individual, this applies to the entire people, too. This section is concluded in 13:7-8 by a fluid transition to the praise of Jerusalem which is the subject in 13:9-14:1. Tob 13:7 has the function of a joint. Considering the numerous differences between GII and GI the unanimous statement in Tob 13:7 is striking. This indicates that GI is sharing the position of GII which makes this verse extremely interesting for us:

> "So now (νῦν – nur GII) see what he has done (ἐποίησεν) for you (μεθ᾽ ὑμῶν);
> acknowledge (ἐξομολογήσασθε) him at the top of your voice.
> Bless (εὐλογήσατε) the Lord of righteousness (τὸν κύριον τῆς δικαιοσύνης),
> and exalt (ὑψώσατε) the King of the ages (τὸν βασιλέα τῶν αἰώνων)."

When one reconsiders (θεάσασθε) one's own historical experience one will find how God acts: He reacts to apostasy and for that reason he disperses the people. After their conversion he again gathers his people (Tob 13:5-6). Thus it is actually – and not theoretically – experiencing God which makes one learn ἃ ἐποίησεν μεθ᾽ ὑμῶν. Favourable as well as unfavourable (the latter is not easily understood by modern readers) experiences encourage to praise God.

The word-pair κύριος τῆς δικαιοσύνης and βασιλεύς τῶν αἰώνων emphasizes the power and the authority. μεγαλωσύνη / great, powerful majesty in 13:4 had prepared this theme. The κύριος here addressed is provided with "righteousness". "Righteousness" is a central aspect in Israelite, Egyptian and Greek conceptions of the world, though in different ways respectively. If Israel's god is the lord of righteousness, this means that no other "lord" defines this central value.

This *lord* is no transient appearance which will disappear from the scene very soon. He is the *king* of all aeons, as the ambiguous genetive

form²⁶ τῶν αἰώνων shows. Had the authors only been interested in referring to a long period of time, they would have chosen the frequently used and "clear" phrase εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα / *forever*: But here more is at stake: Whether the English translation *ages* (NRSV) appropriately expresses the ambiguity remains to be seen. As the history of Israel and other nations illustrates, there are prosperous and disastrous periods. In addition the duration of men is transparent and controllable neither in the past nor in the future. As the actual *lord* the κύριος rules and controls all phases of the history of every nation. With the same phrase 13:11 (only found in GI) repeats this idea and emphasizes it by this second quotation.

2.1.2.3. King of Heaven

In Tobit creation (cf. κτίσις in 8:5) is referred to just in passing; nevertheless, central elements of the concept – as the *heaven* – are mentioned several times. God as god (ὁ θεός; 7:13; 8:15) or lord (ὁ κύριος; 7:17) of heaven – as he is residing there (5:17), looks down protectively on men (6:18; 7:12; 10:11), accompanies them when they travel, and thus he will guide Tobias when he returns to his relatives (7:17; 10:13), and he may give joy as a present in general. In 7:12 (GII) οὐρανός is a paraphrase for God. Therefore, it is understandable that "God" and "king of heaven" are a parallelism in exalted praise: "I exalt my God (θεόν μου), and my soul rejoices in the King of heaven (τὸν βασιλέα τοῦ οὐρανοῦ)" (13:9).

In 13:3 the author adopts the aspect of an accompanied wandering as a pilgrimage of the nations (ἔθνη πολλά). Where do the nations go? They want – according to GII – to dwell close to the holy name (τὸ ὄνομα τὸ ἅγιόν σου); neither *God* nor *lord* are mentioned explicitly here. At the same time they bring gifts for the *king of heaven* (τῷ βασιλεῖ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ).

In the book of Tobit the "*name*" – God's name is meant – is a cipher of God, and therefore it is set in parallel with κύριος / θεός nearly throughout. Adjectives viz. verbal adjectives, verbs and temporal duration are attributed to the name; they are also attributed to God; cf. "holy" (ἅγιον; 3:11 [GI]; 13:13,18 [only GII]), "honourable" (ἔντιμον; 3:11 [GI]); "great" (μέγα; 11:14 [twice GII]; "praised" (εὐλογητόν; 3:11; 11:14), "to praise" (εὐλογεῖν; 12:6; 13:18; 14:8 [only GII]), "to exalt" (ὑμνεῖν; 12:6 [GII]), "to elevate" (ὑψοῦν; 12:6) and "everlasting duration" (εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας; 3:11; 11:14 [GI]; 13:18 [GII]; cf. ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ 14:8 [GII]).

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26   Significantly, this ambivalent form is found in LXX of the Old Testament only in Tob 13:7.11 (GI only); 14:15 (GII); Ps 54:20; 83:5; 144:13; Sir 24:33; 36:17; Dan 3:90; 7:18.

Besides this "name" which is used as a substitute for "God" – that is without explicitly mentioning κύριος / θεός – , there is the "king of heaven" as a parallel in Tob 13:13. Among the Biblical books this phrase is only found in Tobit (GII: 1:18; 13:13,17; GI: Tob. 13:9,13) and in other late texts – 3Esd 4:46,58 and 3Macc 2:2 – in addition. The content is that there is only one who may be called king of heaven. That means that he is king of the gods (βασιλεὺς τῶν θεῶν; Deut 9:26; Esth 4:17[18]). GI explains the theologically imprecise formulation "king of heaven" in such a way that it defines its theological position already through the preceding parallel word ὄνομα. The nations do not dwell close to the "holy name", but close to the *name of the lord God*; thereby things are made clear by employing the phrase (ePP[27]) שֵׁם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי[28] / τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου τοῦ θεοῦ[29] frequently attested in the Old Testament. Because of the premises inserted by GI "king of heaven" is no longer misunderstood.

2.1.2.4. The LORD as Great King (13:16,18)

Two matching jubilant acclamations to God (13:16,18) form the conclusion of the praise of Jerusalem; again there are significant differences between GII and GI:

GII 13:16: "My soul blesses the *Lord* (τὸν κύριον), the Great King (τὸν βασιλέα τὸν μέγαν)!".

GI 13:16: "My soul should bless *God* (τὸν θεόν), the Great King (τὸν βασιλέα τὸν μέγαν)!"

GII 13:18: "Blessed should be the God of Israel (ὁ θεὸς τοῦ Ισραηλ)!' and the blessed

will bless the holy name (τὸ ὄνομα τὸ ἅγιον) forever and ever (εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα καὶ ἔτι)."

GI 13:18: "Blessed (εὐλογητός) be the God (ὁ θεός) who exalts all ages (πάντας τοὺς αἰῶνας)."

The variations indicate diverging intentions considering content and theology. GII sets κύριος in parallel with βασιλεύς ὁ μέγας in 13:16. GI, however, changes to θεός. Θεός in 13:18 (GII) is a parallel of ὄνομα τὸ ἅγιον which GI omits. In contrast to the phase of time εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα καὶ ἔτι[30] GI emphasizes the different aeons or phases of time (πάντας τοὺς

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27   All occurrences include an enclitic possessive pronoun.

28   Cf. Exod 20:7; Deut 5:11; 18:7; Jos 9:9; 1Kgs 5:17,19; 8:17,20; 2Kgs 5:11; 1Chr 22:7; 2Chr 2:3; 6:7,10; 33:18; Ps 20:8; Isa 24:15; 48:1; 60:9; Jer 26:16; Joel 2:26; Mic 4:5; 5:3.

29   Cf. Gen 4:26; 21:33; Deut 17:12; 18:7; Jos 9:9; 1Kgs 5:17,19; 8:17,20; 18:24; 1Chr 22:7; 2Chr 2:3; 6:7,10; 33:18; Ps 19:8; Sir 47:18; Mic 4:5; 5:3; Joel 2:26; Isa 48:1; Jer 33:16 and also 3Esd 6:1.

30   Cf. above considering Tob 13,7.

αἰῶνας). In order to keep our argumentation transparent we will now deal separately with GII and GI which meet in the use of the epithet βασιλεὺς ὁ μέγας.

2.1.2.4.1. Tob 13:16,18 in GII

Those who have mourned the strokes of fate Jerusalem suffered may see the joy when she is restored. That is why Tobit feels inwardly *prompted* (ἡ ψυχή μου) to praise "the lord, the Great King". – As was already mentioned "lord" is ambiguous and the apposition "Great King" gives prominence to power. That Hellenistic kings did not understand themselves as ordinary kings is indicated by the following formulation: "Thus says the *Great King* [Nebuchadnezzar], the lord of the whole earth…" (Jdt 2:5) [31]. At the same time this divine potentate is identical with the "*God* of Israel" (Tob 13:18); this emphasizes the theological dimension in a second step. Besides, the never ending glory is stressed.

GII employs the two names of God, first κύριος (13:16) and then θεός (13:18) consciously as it creates an external theological parallelism. Thus this choice of words has a religio-political undertone on the one hand and a confessing one on the other hand. Lord and great king direct attention first towards religious influences which concerned the diasporic community from outside; the latter are implicitly corrected in a Biblical sense. The term "God of Israel" refers to God as he reveals himself in the fortunes of the people, in judgement and salvation. By the name – according to the tradition beginning in Deut 12:5ff. and the Shechina-concept developed from it – God cannot only be designated, but "locally" described and be present. Jerusalem is the visible sign of God's presence.

2.1.2.4.2. Tob 13:16,18 in GI

Instead of κύριος (GII) GI employs θεός in 3:16. Thus the *Great King* taken from the profane sphere is religiously interpreted from the outset. The Biblical author can refer to a psalm where יהוה, in 94:3[LXX] is translated θεός, he is "a great king (מֶלֶךְ גָּדוֹל / βασιλεὺς μέγας) above all the gods". So in the book of Tobit the writer is interested in a univer-

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31 The following occurrences of „Great King" include both profane and theological usage: 2Kgs 18:19; Ezra 5,11; Isa 36:4; Mal 1:14; Ps 46/45:3; 94/95:3; Qoh 9:14; Esth 3:13; 8:12¸cf. PsS 2,32.

sally valid theological statement. He keeps to this strategy quite consistently and omits the reference to Israel in the description of God as well as the mentioning of the name which implies religious practice – just compare the pilgrimage to Jerusalem (Tob 1:4,6-8). It is the aim of the description to prove that God is the lord of the "history of the universe", as He upholds all of its phases (πάντας τοὺς αἰῶνας).

2.1.3. God as Father

Even if not so often, God is called father in several passages within the proto-canonical Old Testament. With this term one associates a special devotion as one expects to receive from one's own father viz. forefather. God remains steadfast in his affection even in such situations when the natural bonds would fail. "For you are our father (אַתָּה אָבִינוּ / ἡμῶν εἶ πατήρ), though Abraham does not know us and Israel does not acknowledge us; you, O LORD, are our father (אַתָּה יְהוָה אָבִינוּ / σὺ κύριε πατὴρ ἡμῶν) ; our Redeemer from of old is your name" (Isa 63:16). The cipher "father" [32] implies protection and support even where the term is obviously employed in a figurative sense: "Father of orphans and protector of widows is God" (Ps 68:6). – In the late period in some passages of Old Testament writings the emphasis shifts from helping support to authority and superiority: "A child (בֵּן / υἱός) honors his father (אָב / πατέρα), and servants (עֶבֶד / δοῦλος) their master (אֲדֹנָיו / τὸν κύριον). If then I am a father (אָב / πατήρ), where is the honor due me? And if I am a master (אֲדוֹנִים / κύριος), where is the respect due me? says the LORD of hosts (יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת / κύριος παντοκράτωρ) …" (Mal 1:6). The title *pantocrator* is introduced into the invocations of prayers, in combination with God and father; cf. Odes 14:12: θεὲ πατὴρ παντοκράτωρ.

Tob 13:4 is in line with this. It is said that God has power over life and death (13:2) and that the diaspora opens up the possibility for the Israelites to begin to sing God's praise before the nations (ἐνώπιον τῶν ἐθνῶν). The latter shall see his majestical greatness (μεγαλωσύνη 13:4). The following abounds in principal names of God: "He is our Lord (αὐτὸς ἡμῶν κύριος) and he is our God (αὐτὸς θεὸς ἡμῶν); he is our Father (αὐτὸς πατὴρ ἡμῶν) and he is God (αὐτὸς θεός) forever." – Since the greatness is emphasized before, one will interpret the quotation – as in other passages in the book of Tobit – in terms of a lordly statement of sovereignty. The word *God* is used twice; it implies divine timeless

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32   Cf. among other occurrences 1Chr 29:10; Isa 64:7,10; Jer 3:4,19; Mal 2:10; Ps 89:27; 103:13; cf. Dtn 1:31; 8:5; Prov 3:12; Sir 51:10; Wis 14:3.

authority. Therefore "father" probably does not indicate the aspect of God's provident care, but is rather a paraphrase of his superior position.

2.2. God's Characteristics

2.2.1. God Is Just and Redeeming

Tobit is ridiculed by the disbelieving members of his tribe and by his unsensible wife because of his indefatigable faith and his conduct showing devotion to God. Feeling disappointed Tobit invokes God in a prayer that he might let him die (Tob 3:6). The introduction of the prayer (3:2) enumerates some aspects of what the Lord/ God is like. The following epithets are enumerated: he is just (δίκαιος)[33], he is ruler and judge[34] (κρίνειν), his ways, i.e. "his behaviour", are mercy (ἐλεημοσύνη[35]) and reliability (ἀλήθεια). Since God is just he will – in spite of the prayer for death – act according to his will (3:6), which is identical in meaning with what is best for Tobit. Only when one has followed all ups and downs in Tobit's life, one will recognize that – though we frequently have a contrary impression – God really is "redeeming" in an encompassing sense, and not only with regard to Tobit as an individual. Even if it is used sparingly, δίκαιος runs like a crimson thread through the entire book.

2.2.2. God Is Merciful

As compared with the rest of Old Testament literature it is striking that in Tobit words derived from the root ἐλε*[36] are found frequently; ἔλεος, ἐλεήμων, ἐλεεῖν more or less exclusively describe God's conduct and his ways of behaviour so that they are especially important, whereas the

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33 Further occurrences of δίκαιος refer to men and human behaviour; GII 7:6 ἀνὴρ δίκαιος // ποιῶν ἐλεημοσύνας; 9:6 καλὲ καὶ ἀγαθέ ἀνδρὸς καλοῦ καὶ ἀγαθοῦ δικαίου καὶ ἐλεημοποιοῦ; 13:15; GI: 4:17; 13:10,15; 14:9.

34 GI emphasizes the aspects "just" and "truthful" by explicitly qualifying judgement as "truthful" and "just": κρίσιν ἀληθινὴν καὶ δικαίαν.

35 The noun ἐλεημοσύνη is used – with the exception of Tob 3:2 – for human behaviour: GII 14:2,8,10; GI 4,7; 14,2; it is explicitly emphasized that God takes notice of these and rescues from death because of such charitable deeds (cf. GII 14,10).

36 The following only takes into account the occurrences in GII.

noun ἐλεημοσύνη – with a few exceptions – designates a generous gift or donation within the human sphere[37].

Whoever is in need and can no longer rely on men, may turn to God because He is merciful (ἐλεήμων). God will certainly hear him, as the examples of Sara (3:11) and of the gathering of the dispersed people (13:5) demonstrate. Because God had mercy on Tobias and Sara (ἠλέησας; 8:17) – in the sense of "to care for s.o. protectively" – both their lives had a so far happy ending. The noun ἔλεος in Tobit means "assistance, protection" (8:4) which God grants (ποιεῖν ἔλεος; 8:4,17); therefore it is already related to σωτηρία as well-being/ redemption (6:18; 8:4,17) and εἰρήνη as salvation (7:12). God's help (ὅτι ἠλέησεν; 11:16) is the cause of the healing of the eyes. It is easily understood that men want to see that in the future there will be God's assistance. "Bring … (the) life to fulfilment in happiness and with *assistance* (μετ᾽ ἐλέου)!" (8:17; cf. 8:7). The basic word חֶסֶד is recalled by the aspect that assistance comes as a great surprise and against any personal expectation (8:16). It is remarkable that one *shall* try to secure divine assistance through prayer (6:18).

2.2.3. God Is Living

Tobit introduces his great hymn (13:1) with the confession that God lives forever (ὁ ζῶν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα). As the unlimited extension of time underlines, the participle is to be interpreted according to Hebrew thinking: at present, as well as in the past and in the future, it is true that God lives. The one who lives provides life and preserves it. Here we come across the explanation why God is acting as he does in the book of Tobit: Tobit and Sara would prefer death to living in their unpleasant situation. Tobias's long journeys, during which he carried a lot of money with him, were extremely risky without military protection. – There is a happy ending and at last there is a gain of insight into the sense of life and a gain of joy of living. – This is true for all protagonists. It shows that the statement that God is living is not only an information about God, but at the same time it explains that he guarantees life, preserves life that is in danger and increases the joy of living.

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37   1:3,16; 2:14; 3:2; 7:6; 12:8f; 14:2,8,10f (GII) and in GI 1:3,16; 2:14; 4:7f,10f,16; 12:8f; 14:2,10f; refer to human behaviour; God's acting in a more general way is only mentioned in 3:2 and 13:8 (only GI).

2.3. God's Ways of Acting

Once and for all the focus of actions in the book of Tobit is the Lord. How God reveals himself and how he wants to be understood is shown by the activities which originate with him. The multiple and different examples create a diversified image which is difficult to systematize.

2.3.1. God's Fundamental Care

In his decisions God remains independent of man; he does not allow his will to be influenced (cf. 4:19). This divine constancy does not mean any arbitrariness because it is guided by further purposes.

● Who is praying knows that the Lord will do what is best for the one imploring (τὸ ἀρεστόν ποιεῖν; 1:6), and one may assume that he is accomplishing something beneficial (ἐποίησεν … ἀγαθά; 12:6).

● Therefore it is in man's interest that God takes notice of him. When God looks at the praying person (ἐπιβλέπειν; 1:3), the answer is close at hand.

● However, God does not shower his devotion on men indiscriminately. Especially where one may almost jump at the fact that pure idealism is the motive for extraordinarily good acting, God becomes mistrustful as can be seen with Tobit. The Lord seems to be surprised by the spontaneity and the radicalism of complying with the commandment to bury the dead, and he sends (ἀποστέλλειν; 12:13) Raphael in order to examine (πειράζειν; 12:13) the sincerity of such actions. One will recall Job 1:7-12, though in Tobit it is God himself who initiates the controlling.

● But this does not imply anything dangerous, since God has mercy (ἐλεεῖν) upon man, and that means that he makes him experience something beneficial (11:16). In God's power there is a chance and possibility of assistance which does not occur at random.

● When one prays to God one can move him to make assistance and redemption (ἔλεος and σωτηρία) develop (γίνεσθαι; 6:18). God does not only have the abstract ability at his disposal to effect (ποιεῖν; 7:12; 8:4,17) protection (ἔλεος) and well-being (σωτηρία).

● In actual situations God's ability proves to be effective. – Although, or rather just because God resides in heaven, he is able to observe the persons who are travelling to a distant region and to rescue (διασῴζειν; 5:17) them from all imaginable dangers, so that the blind father who stayed at home did not have to worry, but

could be sure that his travelling son would return safe and sound (ἀποκαθιστάνειν ὑγιαίνων; 5:17).

● Man is not able to take his own life in his hand independently from God and to make everything turn out well. Therefore, Raguel prays, that God might lead the lives of the newly-wed couple to a happy ending (συντελεῖν τὴν ζωήν; 8:17).

2.3.2. God's helpful Presence in Imminent Danger

From the material collected so far it is clear that one's destiny firmly remains in God's hand, even the entire life is guided and accompanied by God.

● God grants guidance and redemption in difficult situations: As already seven bridegrooms have died in their respective wedding night, Raguel is afraid, that the series of misfortunes will go on. His wish that the young couple Sara and Tobias may be protected by the lord during the night (εὐοδώσει; 7:12), is filled with fear and doubts, since Raguel obviously is not confident (any more), that the lord will actually intervene protectively. The meaning of the root which is inherent in the word εὐοδοῦν [εὐ + ὁδός / good way (of life)] is realized when God assists (εὐοδῶσαι; 7:13; 10:11) protectively (εἰρήνην).

● Man who is left to himself is not unable to cope with the manifold dangers ; therefore God sends messengers, that is angels, at a time he has chosen and to the right place (ἀποστέλλειν; 3:17; 12:13,14,20).

● Also with a helping angel it is the lord himself who takes, for instance, the travellers safely home (ἀποκαθιστάνειν; 10:13).

● God brings those persons together wo are destined for one another. Because of this Tobit can praise God that he has brought his daughter-in-law to him (ἄγειν; 11:17).

2.3.3. Special Spheres of God's Acting

God accompanies the entire life and correspondingly his "actions" are manifold. Two different poles are to be mentioned: (1) On the one hand God bestowes something good on man, (2) on the other hand he restores order when there is a state of disaster.

2.3.3.1. God's actions are always good; different spheres can be described here.

● God does not set up an account, but he gives (διδόναι). He gives different things.

God gives what we need for living (ζῆν; 5:20). And in order to use it well we need good ideas (βουλὴν ἀγαθήν; 4:19), which are also inspired by him. One of God's gifts is joy (χαράν; 7:17).

● For living successfully and "salvation-historically" relevant are χάρις, ἔλεος, εἰρήνην and εὐλογία. – Out of conviction and not self-interestly Tobit observes those rules, which were unrenounceable in the diaspora. God reacts to this by advancing Tobits's political career, which Tobit interprets as graceful gift (δίδωμι χάριν; 1:12). God gives his protection and welfare (ἔλεος und εἰρήνην; 7:12[38]), so that evil powers have no effect.

God gives his blessing (εὐλογίαν; 9:6).

● When Tobit has run into trouble he turns to the lord; his first prayer is that the lord might think of him (κύριος μιμνήσκομεσθαι; 1:3). This includes that the lord hears his prayer and will find a solution for the difficult situation.

● God expects that one turns to him in prayer. One cannot force an answer from God, but hope is justified that God will hear the prayer (εἰσηκούσθη ἡ προσευχή; 3:16; cf. 12:12).

2.3.3.2. The book of Tobit describes that Tobit, who is distinguished by an extremely exemplary way of living, finds himself in serious trouble.

● By his prayer Tobit tries to induce the lord to release (ἀπολύειν; 1:6) him of his affliction (ἀπὸ τῆς ἀνάγκης; 1:6). As the trouble is so extreme it would appear to be a release for him if God lets him die (3:13).

● Raphael explains to the blind and helpless Tobit, that God will heal him (ἰάσασθαι; 5:10; cf. Exod 15,26), if he will rely on God exclusively. Thus he confirms the purpose of his commission (3:17; 12:14) and explains his name unintentionally.

● Not only individual persons, the entire people then experience with his own assistance God's re-turning (ἐπιστρέφειν; 13:6) to them, when they have submitted to God beforehand.

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38   The death-bringing activity of Ασμοδαῖος τὸ δαιμόνιον τὸ πονηρόν, is meant; though he does not let the married couple live, he makes the success of God's plan possible in this destructive manner; for this difficult figure cf. Owens, Asmodeus (in the present volume); Ego, "Denn er liebt sie"; Ego, Variants.

2.3.4. God's Reaction to offence

God is not a toy for man. When men become guilty of different tres-
passes or even crimes God reacts in a rejecting and even angry way.

2.3.4.1. God Punishes

The Biblical author says with different verbs how God directs his activ-
ity against those who have committed an offence.
- The Lord is the sovereign of human life; he may lift up, but he
may as well let fall into fathomless depths, metaphorically speaking
"cast down to the bottom of Hades" (ταπεινόειν; 4:19).
- When Tobit turns to the Lord in prayer he becomes conscious of
his sinfullness and asks not to be punished (μή με ἐκδικήσῃς; 1:3) for
it.
- When Tobit describes his blindness and the misfortune connected
with it with the verb μαστιγοῦν (11:14), he cannot mean "flogging";
instead he uses a modified meaning of the word saying that calamity
befell him which was inflicted by God. But God punishes (μαστιγοῦν;
13:2,5) misdeeds (ἀδικίαι) and this may lead up to the exile.

2.3.4.2. God Who Disperses the People

- Without any reference to the political-military power of other na-
tions it is said that it is exclusively in God's power to disperse the
people (διασπείρειν; 13:3); this also implies that he can gather it again
when the presuppositions for doing so are given.

2.3.4.3. God Leads into Death

Most impressively God's sphere of influence is revealed when he dis-
poses of life and death. In varying forms the author talks about this in
the book of Tobit.
- God leads into the experience of the borderline of death. The dis-
persion exposed the people to such a hopelessness that they felt the
breath of the underworld (κατάγειν ἕως ᾅδου ᾅδης) and were no
longer sure whether God was willing to preserve the existence of his
people. After being rescued from dire distress they recognized
God's power as he could lead into the nearness of death and could

as well rescue them from the experience of destruction (ἀνάγειν ἐκ τῆς ἀπωλείας τῆς μεγάλης; 13:2).

● To take away the spirit is a paraphrase of God's power to cause death (ἀναλαβεῖν τὸ πνεῦμα; 1:6)

● In hopeless despair Sara prays that the Lord would bring about her death viz. would let her die (ἀποθνήσκειν; 1:10; ἀποκτείνειν; 3:15). Words like these attribute the right to dispose of death, to God.

2.4. Ways of Acting before God

We have noted several times that God reacts to man's behaviour with assent or rejection. For this reason the ways of acting which are related to God are especially relevant for understanding the concept of God in the book of Tobit.

2.4.1. Attitude towards God

The first level is one's attitude towards God because this is the basis for any concrete activity.

● What is constantly before one's eyes, determines one's life. It is Tobit's first advice to remember the Lord (μνημονεύειν τοῦ κυρίου; 4:5).

● As a blind man Tobit describes himself as someone buried alive who cannot help his son. Raphael comforts him by indicating that he may reckon with God's assistance if he will rely on God exclusively (θάρσει ἐγγὺς παρὰ τῷ θεῷ; 5:10).

● To feel content with what one has is a central virtue. Who strives for it avoids risky undertakings. Sara worries about her son who is going to travel, and she emphasizes that she does not need that money, as she is satisfied with what she has (ἱκανὸν εἶναι; 5:28). In any case, God gives what is necessary for living.

● It is striking that in a rather extensive book which deals throughout with decisive events in life and where God is permanently involved, the subject "respect for God/ fear of God" is only mentioned once. It is not decisive that one is poor. There are more important virtues; according to 4:21 respect for God (φοβεῖσθαι τὸν θεόν) is the most prominent. This respect is not so much taken as a task, but as an individual decision in favour of God.

2.4.2. Active and Practical Worship of God

Of course, practical behaviour reflects one's attitude towards God. This holds true no matter whether one does something (1) negative or (2) positive. The effect on one's relation to God, however, is contrary.

2.4.2.1. Offence against God

● Without putting it precisely, generally everything which might be wrong in relation to the Lord/ God as well as any flirting with sinning (ἁμαρτεῖν; 4:5) is rejected. Who has to stand on trial before God, the judge (3:2), becomes aware of his faultiness. When he begs for his assistance, the sins (ἁμαρτίαι) and offences (ἀγνοήματα; 3:4) become evident before God answers; that is why the person praying asks for indulgence. About sin one reads in Gen 4:7, that it is lurking at the entrance of the heart like a beast of prey. A similar idea is found in Tobit as well: This "active" element of sin is connected with individual assent, so that the offence is regarded as a misdeed committed on purpose; however, one can avoid it deliberately ("run away" φεύγειν; 4:21 [as from danger]). What terrible consequences sin (ἁμαρτία) and injustice (ἀδικία) have, is indicated by the dispersion of the people on the one hand (14:7) and by the parallelization with death on the other (θάνατος; 12:9).

● If one violates the Lord's commandments (παραβαίνειν τὰς ἐντολάς; 4:5), one will commit an offence, if one does not make use of the opportunity to trespass against the commandments, one will do something good.

2.4.2.2. Right Behaviour before God

● In general – without being able to say in what such actions consist – it is true that not wealth gives life its sense, but to do good (ποιεῖν τὰ ἀγαθα; 4:21) before the Lord God (κύριος ὁ θεός).

● How to serve God (δουλεύειν) is described with regard to three spheres 14:8: (a) To do whatever pleases God, to bear him in mind persistently, and to praise him always. (b) In the personal sphere to strive for a righteous behaviour and (c) to help one's fellow-men by giving alms.

● When the people re-turn (ἐπιστρέφειν: 13:6) to God with genuine and deep conviction (ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ καρδίᾳ) and with real passion (ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ ψυχῇ), God will react with grace.

● One of man's destination is to pronounce in public the message of God's acting. With great emphasis Raphael stresses that it is the pri-

mary task to proclaim God's deeds (τὰ ἔργα) in public (ἀνακαλύπτειν καὶ ἐξομολογεῖσθαι; 12:7,11).

● In the book of Tobit the praise of God is unrivalled. To praise God is central point and climax in one's relations with God; several terms are used for this[39], we can only indicate a few aspects of the numerous occurrences. The praise of God which functions as a kind of spontaneous basic tribute (cf. 11:14,16; 12:17,18,20; 13:1), is expressed as a kind of joyful thanks giving because having experienced God's assistance. Tobias praises God (εὐλογεῖν τῷ κυρίῳ; 10:14; 11:15), because he let him finish the journey to a distant country successfully. Raphael demands to praise God because of all the good (ἀγαθά; 12:6) and for his great deeds (τὰ ἔργα und τὰ μεγάλα; 12:22).

2.4.3. Prayer

More often than it is explicitly said one finds concrete prayer in the book. In addition there are several hints, which allude to the fact that praying in itself plays an important role with regard to the relation with God.

● Even when father and mother do not help any more and the situation seems hopeless one may turn to God trustingly and ask him for help (δέεσθαι τοῦ κυρίου; 3:10; 6:18).

● Raphael recommends to pray to God (προσεύχεσθαι; 6:18).

3. Raphael's Speaking about God in the Overall Theological Concept of the Book of Tobit

The above investigation mentioned Raphael time and again. Therefore it is evident that themes are connected with him which can be tied up with the entire complex of theological statements in the book of Tobit. This may evoke the impression that there are no special characteristics.

In Chapter 12[40], as in other passages (cf. e.g. 13:3) as well, Raphael invites Tobit, for instance, to praise God. Nevertheless, here a difference begins to appear: all individual persons as well as Israelites, who praise the Lord, have a reason of their own why they start to sing the

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39   Cf. e.g. the following key-words in GII εὐλογεῖν (in 3:11; 8:5,15; 9:6; 10:14; 11:14ff; 12:6,17f,20,22; 13:7,15f,18; 14:2,6,8,15), εὐλογία (5:17; 7:6; 8:15; 9:6; 11:17), εὐλογητός (3:11; 8:5,15ff; 9:6; 11:14,17; 13:2,14,18), ἀγαλλίαμα (13:13,18), ἐξομολογεῖν (11:16; 12:6f,20,22; 13:3,7,17; 14:2), ὑμνεῖν (12:6:18:22) und ὑψοῦν (13:4:7).

40   Cf. Ego, Figure.

song of praise. In Raphael's words this becomes a general invitation, so to speak a generally applicable universal basic task: "Bless God (τὸν θεόν) and acknowledge him in the presence of all the living for the good things he has done for you. Bless and sing praise to his name. With fitting honor declare to all people the deeds of God. Do not be slow to acknowledge him." (12:6). So Raphael is God's herald, who interprets the experiences individual persons viz. the entire people have had (ἃ ἐποίησεν μεθ᾽ ὑμῶν ἀγαθά) as a joyful message for all living beings (ἐνώπιον πάντων τῶν ζώντων)[41].

The difference is even more prominent in the following spheres: information, which is the basis for God's activity, is communicated only by Raphael. He is the one whom God explicitly sends for such a purpose (3:17; 12:13f,20); in the book of Tobit it is only said with regard to prophets in such a general way that God has sent them (14:4). Raphael is the one who examines (πειράζειν; cf. 2.3.1. above), whether human behaviour is true and sincere. It is one of his functions to bring prayers before God (12,12).

For understanding the figure of Raphael the verb ἰᾶσθαι is decisive. It is worthwhile to note that it occurs three times (3:17; 5:10; 12:14) and that it indicates divine acting. It is connected exclusively with Raphael and his commission. Thus it is Raphael's special mission to promise healing viz. to heal himself; in this very context it becomes clear that it is God who is at work.

Raphael's theology: God accompanies life, he effects welfare, and he especially heals humans from outward and inward infirmity. Raphael is the personified message of salvation (soteriology).

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41   Insofar identical phrases are accentuated differently

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Asmodeus: A Less Than Minor Character in the Book of Tobit

A Narrative-Critical Study

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1. Introduction

The study of minor characters in the scriptures can be a challenge. Names such as Zipporah (Exod 2:16-22), Orpah (Ru 1:4-14), and Job's wife (Job 2:9; 19:17) come to mind. However, the study of such characters enriches our understanding of the meaning and message of biblical texts. One recent work in this regard is Gina Hens-Piazza's study of the cannibal mothers in 2Kgs 6:24-33. She writes, "Nested in the larger structure of the books of Kings, the tale these women tell is difficult. At first glance it courts revulsion."[1] Yet a closer reading reveals that these women force the reader to address violence in the course of salvation history and in our own lives. Who are those devoured by war, poverty, and non-identity? On minor characters in general, Hens-Piazza observes, "Still, we have learned that minor characters who make us uncomfortable, who are different, or who seem less like ourselves are just as valuable for study, and sometimes more valuable than the major characters with whom we more readily identify."[2]

Recent methods in the literary criticism of biblical texts, including narrative criticism, have enriched the interpretation of biblical texts. Narrative criticism pays attention to the final form and unity of the text. The canonical text is worth studying in its own right because that form contains literary artistry and theological insight. Narrative patterns such as conflict, contrast, reversal, comparison, and causation deserve attention. Narrative techniques such as repetition, irony, paradox, pre

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1   Hens-Piazza, Nameless 21.
2   Hens-Piazza, Nameless 21-22. See also Simon, Minor Characters.

paration, chiasm, and *inclusio* also inform our understanding.[3] At times a certain theme or motif can be useful to understanding characters and events as the story unfolds. I utilize some narrative-critical methods in this study. My aim is to offer the reader a fuller understanding of the characterization of Asmodeus in the Book of Tobit, as well as how the demon's presence informs the message of the book.

2. Asmodeus

The belief in and literary use of angels and demons in the Greco-Roman world impacted on Jewish and Christian writings. I Enoch, Jubilees, The Genesis Apocryphon, the New Testament gospels, and the Mishnah represent the breadth of such influence. Alhough demons are largely discussed in general in the literature, proper names emerge. Lilith, the legendary first wife of Adam and killer of newborns, comes closest to Asmodeus in terms of violence to marriage and family.

Many studies of Asmodeus are diachronic, looking at the origins of the name, as well as demonology in the intertestamental period and later Jewish folklore. More synchronic investigations largely write of the demon in passing, noting its role in Sarah's plight and later its banishment to Egypt.[4] Outside of the book of Tobit, Asmodeus appears most prominently in the Testament of Solomon (5:1-13). In this pseudepigraphon the archangel Michael gives Solomon a ring that grants him power over the demons. In Solomon's encounter with Asmodeus he learns that the demon is the offspring of an angel and a human mother. Astrologically depicted as the Great Bear, Asmodeus foments wickedness, murders newlyweds, and drives women mad.[5] Indeed, there is more to Asmodeus than what appears in the book of Tobit. In extrabiblical art and literature he becomes a wild demon of lust, and even a magician.

Asmodeus is certainly *the* minor character in the Book of Tobit and seems quite "flat" at first glance. The demon is largely spoken about and acted against. His only explicit action is fleeing to Egypt and there bound by the angel Raphael (8:3). Their struggle reflects the develop-

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3   See Powell, Criticism; see also Alter, Art; Bar-Efrat, Art.

4   See Grey, Meaning 790-792; Deselaers, Buch 89; Soll, Asmodeus 116, on meanings and occurrences of the name. See Lange et al., Dämonen 239-421, on demons in the Persian and Hellenistic periods. On the depiction of Asmodeus in later art and folklore, see Voelkle, Morgan Manuscript, 106-107. In Christian morality Asmodeus becomes the demon of lust, one of the Seven Deadly Sins.

5   See Duling, Testament 935.

ment of angels vs. demons in the intertestamental period.[6] Only the companion dog gets less attention than he! Asmodeus' depiction in the book is enigmatic and contradictory. Despite the fact that he purportedly loves Sarah, he slays all her new husbands (6:15)! His characterization bespeaks, "If I can't have her no one will." Although a minor character in the overall story, Asmodeus has a major impact on the character Sarah.

In addition to the demon, Sarah is also the object of derision from her maidservants: "You are the one who kills your husbands! Look, you have already been given to seven husbands, but you have borne the name of not one of them" (3:8; cf. Gen 16:4-6).[7] Such verbal abuse from subordinates helps explain her thoughts of suicide, a theme uncommon in the scriptures.[8] Aware that God is the one who bestows the blessing of fertility (Gen 1:27-28; 20:17-18; 30:2; 1Sam 1:6), Sarah says nothing back to her servants. She turns quickly to God in prayer.

How then can one interpret the role of Asmodeus beyond his being the "flat" minor character that basically occasions the rescue of Sarah from her plight and highlights Raphael and Tobiah as his nemeses? Attention to some patterns and techniques in the narrative offer clues to a richer understanding of the demon. The minor character must be understood in relation to the major characters and what happens to them as the story unfolds. A particular theme or motif can inform the understanding of a minor character. Harking back to Hens-Piazza's remark cited above, Asmodeus can prove to be "valuable" to the book of Tobit.

2.1 Asmodeus in the Narrative Context

The three scenes that mention Asmodeus (3:7-17; 6:2-18; 8:1-21; cf. 12:18) offer grist for narrative interpretation.[9] To begin, Sarah's di-

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6   See Schüngel-Straumann, Tobit 92-93.

7   Quotations are taken from Fitzmyer, Tobit, wherein he includes attention to the Semitic texts from Qumran. See his comments on p. 89. For the ancient texts I refer to the critical editions of Hanhart, Tobit; Weeks, Book.

8   See Deselaers, Buch 89. Suicide occurs only seven times in the Hebrew Scriptures (Judg 9:54; 16:30; 1Sam 31:4 and 5; 2Sam 17:23; 1Kgs 16:18; cf. Judas in the NT, Matt 27:5; Acts 1:18). See Droge, Suicide 225-31, and Boadt, Suicide 966-968, on the subject.

9   The proper name Asmodeus occurs only twice in G$^{I, II}$ (3:8, 17), the scene of Sarah's prayer and petition.
     The impersonal designation of demon is more common (G^{I} 3:8, 17; 6:8, 15, 16, 18; 8:3 and G^{II} 3:8, 17; 6:8, 14, 16, 18; 8:3). The sparse reference to the proper name calls to mind the Pharaohs of the book of Exodus. They remain nameless, while the mid-

lemma in Ecbatana parallels that of Tobit in Nineveh (3:1-6).[10] Her innocent suffering calls to mind the book of Job.[11] Like Job she shows the willingness to argue with God. Unlike Tobit, her prayer raises an option other than death: "If it is not pleasing to you to take my life, O Lord, then listen to the criticism of me" (3:15). In sum, Sarah begs God just to do *something*, whether granting her death or offering a merciful answer to her prayer.[12] In the end (3:16-17) the prayers of Tobit and Anna will be answered, in part, via the agency of the angel Raphael. He will be sent to facilitate Tobit's regained sight and Sarah's wish for a husband. The angel unites two families in marriage and gives reason for the praises of God sung by Raguel and Tobit (8:15-17; 11:14-15; 13:1-18).

Second, Asmodeus is cited during the journey to Media. At a rest stop along the Tigris River a fish bites Tobiah's foot. Raphael tells him to conserve its gall, heart, and liver for future use.[13] Later on the journey the significance of these parts for exorcism is revealed (6:8, 14). Therein the theme of love for Sarah recurs threefold: her father (6:12), the demon Asmodeus (6:15), and Tobiah (6:18).[14] When read together in the canonical book, a triangle of love emerges in the narrative. The warm human love of Raguel and Tobiah contrasts with the oxymoronic cruel love of Asmodeus. The idea of dysfunctional love comes to mind in the modern reader. Although verbs of love are used (ἀγαπάω or φιλέω in G[I] and G[II]), Asmodeus arguably demonstrates selfish lust. He must be banished for two families to be united and genuine love attained.[15] Tobiah is the one destined for Sarah: "You are next of kin to her, and beyond all other men you have the right to inherit what comes

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wives of the Hebrews are remembered as Shiphrah and Puah (Exod 1:15). Such omissions suggest a dismissive attitude toward negative characters.

10   Tobit and Sarah are temporally and spiritually together in prayer (3:7). See Griffin, Theology.

11   Despite some affinities to the more progressive theology of retribution in Job, the overall Deuteronomistic theology in Tobit is apparent, that is, suffering is a test of fidelity and ends rewarded. But like Job the young girl Sarah takes her stand and presses her case; she is no shrinking violet who sits passively and awaits vindication via the conservative tradition of divine retribution. On Deuteronomistic theology see Di Lella, Background; and Theology.

12   See Di Lella, Prayers 107-113, for a detailed study of Sarah's prayer.

13   See Kollmann, Offenbarung 292-293, on the socio-cultural background of such magic.

14   The demon's love is unevenly witnessed in the ancient versions. Fitzmyer's translation, which I am using, brings together the three references to love in Tobit 6. On the textual variants see Fitzmyer, Tobit 212, 215, 220-221, as well as Moore, Tobit 196-197.

15   The modern reader must take into account that love here is not primarily about affection but about marriage and its duties. Hence, Tobiah can profess love before even meeting Sarah. See Dancy, Tobit 40.

to her; all that belongs to her father it is your right to inherit" (6:12). Raguel is honorable (6:12, καλός in G^{II}); Asmodeus knows no human virtue and enjoys no marital relations with Sarah.[16] In sharp contrast to such values as endogamy, loyalty, and familial piety, Asmodeus stands in stark contrast.

Third, at the turning point in the story, with Tobiah adamant about marrying Sarah (7:9-11), Asmodeus is finally banished (8:1-21). The showdown, so to speak, seems anticlimactic, comprising only two verses (8:2-3). The apotropaic power of the smoke takes effect immediately and may well bespeak an intended diatribe against empty pagan magic. God is the creator of all and controller of the universe, calling to mind the depiction of heavenly bodies in Gen 1:16-18. These lamps are only "good" when understood in their proper place in the created order. In terms of the theology of creation, Asmodeus bespeaks a return to primordial chaos. On creation in Genesis, Clifford writes:

> In the Genesis system the human race is the center of a harmonious universe, spanning and uniting it before God. Because God is not needy like the gods of comparable cosmologies, the Genesis system is designed less immediately to provide essential services for the divine world. God does not make things primarily for the divine world (e.g., marshes as the source of bricks and reeds for the temple, animals for its sacrifices, and human beings to build it), but rather to enable the human race to play its role in the world.[17]

Such theology of creation informs the book of Tobit (cf. 3:2, 11; 8:6;13:11). Urbrock deems the book an "Earth story":

> "... the book of Tobit exhibits a strong sense of kinship or interconnectedness between Earth, humans, other animals, and angels. Worlds interconnect or interpenetrate in this book, and are balanced. The troublesome demon Asmodeus, who does his mischief among earthlings, has unwitting partners in the birds of the courtyard."[18]

The narrative overlooks details such as how Asmodeus got into the bridal chamber or how the newlyweds were able to stand the smoky stench. More efficacious is the prayer that ensues (8:5-7). Therein Tobiah and Sarah reecho praise of the mercy and blessings that come from God. Tobiah's acceptance and love for his bride is explicit; she is his

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16   Ego, Er 309-317; Textual Variants 371-378, takes Asmodeus to be a jealous and love-sick demon from whom Sarah must get a "divorce" of sorts in order to be freed. Though intriguing, I find the conclusions unconvincing. More simply, Raphael comes to release (ἀπολῦσαι) cataracts from Tobit's eyes and loose (λῦσαι) the demon from Sarah (3:17). Cf. 3:6, 13. In 10:12 Raguel sends off (ἀπέλυσεν) Tobiah and Sarah. The meaning and emphasis are on healing and marriage, not divorce from a demon.

17   Clifford, Creation 144.

18   Urbrock, Angels 137.

sister (ἀδελφή, 8:4).[19] The new father-in-law Raguel soon enjoins his best wishes: "Show them mercy and deliverance, Master, and bring their lives to term with happiness and mercy" (8:17).

2.2 The Bed Motif

The characterization of Asmodeus emerges in the comparison and contrast with other personages in the book. But narrative criticism also looks at themes and motifs that inform biblical stories[20] I now turn to a selected motif in the book of Tobit that informs our understanding of characters, including Asmodeus.[21]

The motif of the "bed" (and bedroom by extension) informs the story. To begin, besides the bed as a euphemism for sexual union (Gen 49:4; 1 Chr 5:1), Hammett well summarizes the semantic range of the bed motif:

> The bed was used not only as a place of rest, but also as a place one went to await death (Gen 48:2; 49:33). It was thus used as a figurative expression for death (Job 17:13; Ps. 139:8). The righteous meditate (Ps 4:4 [MT 5]; 63:6 [7]) and sing to God (Ps. 149.5) on beds, while the wicked plot wickedness on their beds (Ps. 36: 4[5]). The sluggard stays lazy in bed (Prov 26:14), while he should be up doing nobler things (Ps 132:3).[22]

Some of these meaning apply to the story at hand: sexual union, wickedness and death, and meditation/prayer in the bedroom or on the bed.[23]

The first mention of the bed motif occurs in Tob 7. Edna prepares the marriage bedroom (ταμίειον, 7:15-16; cf. 8:1, 4). It is noteworthy that *both* of Sarah's parents are responsible for this action: "Edna went and

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19   Moore, Tobit 237, notes that "sister", as a term of endearment, can refer to a bride; see Cant 4:9, 10, 12. The loyalty, and perhaps affection, expressed here harks back to the beginning of the book. Tobit has ever been charitable toward his relatives (1:3, τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς), and now his son demonstrates such values toward Sarah.

20   On theme and motif I follow the distinction used by Alter, Art 95. A theme is an idea in the narrative (love, hate, remembering), while a motif is a concrete image or sensory quality (fire, water, the staff of Moses). Distinct from a *Leitwort* (the abundant repetition of a word or word root), a motif may be symbolic and more inferred from the narrative context.

21   See MacDonald, Food 165-176, for a study of the motifs of food and drink in the Old Testament. In the book of Tobit he sees in these motifs a humorous connection between death, sex, and food.

22   Hammett, Bed 159.

23   Though not explicit, one may infer the bed motif in Tobit 2-3. Tobit sleeps next to the wall of the courtyard and is blinded (2:9); soon he utters what may be called a "deathbed" prayer (3:1-6).

made the bed in the bedroom, *as he had told her*" (7:16). The reader should appreciate the pathos and the tension at work in this scene. A feast and a potential funeral are juxtaposed in the moment. Under the superficial air of celebration at the "rehearsal dinner" lurks anxiety and fear. Which of Raguel's statements will prove right: "I have already given her to seven kinsmen, and all of them died on the night they were to be with her ... (and you're next Tobiah)" or "... the Lord will act for you both" (7:11)? [24] Although the reader knows the final outcome, one must appreciate the inner life of the characters as well.[25]

On several levels comic irony is evident in the scene. Tobit asks for death (3:1-33). Now Tobiah, at least in the mind of Raguel's family, may well be asking for death should he marry Sarah.[26] Raguel reassures his future son-in-law and toasts to his happiness, but Raguel still digs a grave just in case (8:9-10). Confident of his imminent death, Tobit arranges for his son's future security (4:1-4); less than confident of the impending marriage, Raguel arranges for Tobiah's burial. Finally, the insecurity of Raguel sharply contrasts with the self-assuredness of To-biah: "I shall not eat here or drink anything until you settle what pertains to me" (7:11).[27] Tobiah is aware of matters unknown to Raguel and his family (instructions from the angel Raphael, the repellant fish parts), but the two men's first encounter seems an odd reversal of roles in "meeting the in-laws." One might expect the future father-in-law to be confident and diligently sizing up future son-in-law. One might expect the future in-law to be nervous and awkward.[28]

In this scene Asmodeus is absent but implied. He has already been the sevenfold agent of death, and without him this crisis in the story would not exist. The theme of endogamy would simply be highlighted as Sarah is destined for Tobiah (3:17). Indeed, family is the key theme in

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24   The experiences of the two mothers evoke pathos as well. While Edna prepares the dangerous marriage bed, Anna habitually watches the road by which her son left (11:5). Their motherly care and anxious concern for their children reflects God's care for people (8:17).

25   Fitzmyer, Tobit 34, notes the story lacks a plot in the strict sense of the word. It lacks building suspense and a climax for the already in-the-know reader. However, the reader can still enter into the experience of the characters and sense their emotions at any given point.

26   See McCracken, Narration. He writes of Sarah: "Losing one husband on the wedding night is sad business, while losing seven is almost inevitably comic" (417).

27   Nickelsburg, Tobit 799, notes that Tobiah's pressing of a business matter before the meal is a breach of etiquette.

28   Di Lella, Prayers 108, makes a similar point about Tobit's and Sarah's prayers for death: "The reader perhaps would have expected Sarah to shed tears and carry on, and the older Tobit to be in control of his emotions."

the chapter.[29] Tobiah respects endogamy in line with his father's own example (1:9) and already has his heart set on Sarah. Raguel rejoices in his kinship with Tobit (7:5-6), and has not lost hope of a lasting marriage for his sole daughter. Asmodeus stands in stark contrast to and isolation from all the other characters. He is not a human being and behaves in an inhuman manner (compare Gen 6:1-4). His presence lurking in the background adds pathos and contrast to the characterization of the book. Family bespeaks a consistent investment in others, a part of the characterization of the families of Tobit and Raguel. Tobiah's intentions with Sarah are rooted in sincerity (ἀλήθεια), not motivated by lust (πορνεία, 8:7). Sincerity and truth mean especially keeping the commandments.[30] Asmodeus' so-called love is essentially lust in disguise.

The bed motif continues into chapter 8, reaching its high point and the reversal of misfortunes for the families about to be united in marriage. In the first several verses the bed motif recurs. They all want to go to bed (8:1, lit. κοιμηθῆναι, "to fall sleep"), but first Raguel and Edna take Tobiah and Sarah to the marriage room (ταμίειον) for their wedding night.[31] Tobiah acts with dispatch to counter the demon, using the fish parts conserved at the advice of the angel Raphael. The apotropaic effect occurs immediately. No struggle ensues. Asmodeus simply flees to Egypt and is bound by Raphael. With equal dispatch Tobiah calls his bride to prayer on their marriage bed (8:4, ἀπὸ τῆς κλίνης). On the bed the couple blesses God in an extended prayer that includes petition. It is ironic that the ongoing anxiety about the demon (3:8; 6:8, 15; 7:11) now banishes so quickly. He who had killed seven husbands is brought down by the smelly innards of a dead fish!

This scene draws Asmodeus directly into the story, and his characterization informs the meaning and message of what unfolds. The demon that had killed seven husbands is now banished at the very scene of his deeds, that is, the marriage bed. There is no struggle in the exorcism as one might expect in face of a demon. No longer does Sarah have her deathbed. In the broader context of the story Tobit and Sarah ironically share "deathbeds" (chap. 3) but hers is the real tragedy. Tobit's metaphorical deathbed is Sarah's stark reality sevenfold. Tobit's incident is accidental (bird droppings); Sarah's plight is malicious (As-

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29   See Moore, Tobit 224.

30   See Rabenau, Studien 142.

31   Zimmermann, Book 91-93, suggests reading v.4a after v.1, thus harmonizing the actions of Sarah's parents.

modeus). Both fates are absurd but both victims will enjoy a reversal of misfortune which bespeaks a move from death to life.[32]

Central to this scene is the theme of prayer that eclipses the problem of Asmodeus. Tob 8:1-3 deals with the demon, while 8:4-8 narrates the prayer of Tobiah and Sarah and 8:9-21 a successful marital union and the joint prayer of two families united. Henceforth, Asmodeus is just a by-word: "He [*Raphael*] cured my wife ..." (12:3).[33] The guardian angel gets the credit in the end. Raphael instructs Tobiah on their journey, and Tobiah returns the favor by giving the angel much recognition in the end.

One more detail in the scene deserves comment, that is, Raguel's digging of a grave in anticipation of Tobiah's possible death. Raguel's motivation stems not only from past circumstance but also from the perspective of honor: "Lest he [Tobiah] die and we become a laughing-stock and object of ridicule" (8:10).[34] This verse, read together with "Then he bade his servants fill up the grave before dawn would come" (8:18), suggests that Raguel is looking at broader implications should Tobiah die. What will others think of his family in light of this embarrassment? His worry proves unwarranted as Tobiah and Sarah arise the next day from their wedding night. One could say that Raguel's concern about honor and shame ends up being Asmodeus' fate. The demon himself ends up a laughing-stock and object of ridicule. Despite the reputation of demons in folklore, he ends up bound in a faraway place never to haunt Sarah again.

Finally, the bed motif occurs once more at the death of Tobit: "So they laid Tobit on his bed and he died" (ἐπὶ τῆς κλίνης, 14:11). In the end the "deathbeds" of Tobit and Sarah take another ironic twist. In the beginning the "deathbed" was Tobit's fantasy but Sarah's reality. In the end the deathbed becomes Tobit's reality and the close of the story. His wish for death early in the story was full of bitterness because of an absurd accident (bird droppings in the eyes). In the end his actual death is dignified: "He was buried there with due honor" (14:11). Earlier Raguel was anxious about dishonor by the untimely death of To-

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32 Nowell, Book 201-205, discusses death and life as the basic opposition in the book. A number of nouns and verbs signifying death (to die, kill, murder, strangle, destroy/-perish) occur through the narrative and stand in opposition to verbs of release. Cf. note 15 above.

33 Fitzmyer, Tobit 297, notes the angel Raphael's acknowledgement of God's primary hand in the happy ending: "Raphael seeks to get Tobit and his son to understand that God's gracious initiative was the source of his mission and of the effects of it, the cure of Tobit's blindness and the freeing of Sarah from Asmodeus' influence."

34 On the social value of honor see Gilmore, Honor.

biah (8:10); now Tobiah's father dies with honor. Overcoming the hold of the demon Asmodeus was essential to the happy ending.

No longer preoccupied with past problems, the deathbed speech of Tobit turns to what lies ahead. Future tenses punctuate his final discourse. Hence, there is an apocalyptic flavor of his words.[35] In God's time the Jews will return from their captivity and rebuild Jerusalem with splendor, just as the prophets of Israel had foretold (14:5).

In sum, the bed motif informs the reader's understanding. Asmodeus somehow lurks wherever the motif arises, whether in the background or present. The bed serves as a nexus for encounters with God and others. As a motif the bed bespeaks the persons, places, and events that make up the Tobit story: birth and death; love and heartbreak; encounters with others for good or bad, for moments or lifetimes. The bed, on it or kneeling at its side, is also a place of prayer. The book of Tobit is worth reading because it speaks to the perennial vagaries of life.

3. Narrative Criticism and Theology

Narrative and related criticisms offer a lens for understanding minor characters in the scriptures, here Asmodeus. The demon is more than the sum of diachronic sketches or light attention in synchronic studies. Greater attention to his place vis-à-vis other characters commends itself. Likewise, motifs can inform the reader's understanding of the narrative, as does the bed motif here.

If Asmodeus can be identified *with* another character rather than *against* one, it is surely Sennacherib. Both are agents of death, one a spiritual being and the other human. Of the Assyrian king Tobit says, "I also buried anyone Sennacherib had put to death ... In his anger he slew many Israelites, but I would steal their bodies and bury them; when Sennacherib looked for them, he did not find them" (1:18; cf. 2Chr 32:21). To leave the dead unburied and left to the elements was an abomination in ancient Israel (Deut 28:26). The king and the demon show the same character traits. Both lack compassion and kill indiscriminately. Sennacharib is to Tobit's family what Asmodeus is to Raguel's. Tobit has his property confiscated; Sarah loses her newlywed

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35   See Fitzmyer, Tobit 324. Cf. 3:16; 8:2-3; 12:12-15; 13:11.

husbands. Hence, from the very beginning of the story a "demonic spirit" already emerges.[36]

Asmodeus also speaks to the importance of boundaries, a theme discussed above in terms of creation theology. The demon violates marriage boundaries by killing Sarah's husbands, and the union of a demon with a woman offers no fully human offspring, only anomalies. This and another key boundary violation in the book (the confiscation of Tobit's property) teach that identity is often more about genealogy than geography.[37] Hence, endogamy is a key theme in the book. This family value spoke to the Jewish exiles who first read the book of Tobit. Hermeneutically, it still speaks to the modern reader but in new directions. Multiculturalism and diversity challenge xenophobia. Ecumenism struggles against religious intolerance. Endogamy invites a hermeneutic of suspicion.

Most importantly perhaps, a narrative-critical reading of Asmodeus highlights the *affective* side of family life. The value of personal sacrifice, working out domestic problems, letting adult children go their way, and happy family reunions come to mind. Like the story of Joseph in the book of Genesis and the little book of Ruth, this story is much about real people and their life journeys. Although law (property, marriage, and money) is part of social definition, so also is family custom.[38] Emotionally mature people make a consistent investment in the life of others. The primary characters in the book of Tobit show such maturity. Asmodeus' only affective traits appear to be anger, jealousy, and lust. He thinks only of himself.

4. Conclusion

Minor characters are largely overlooked in the study of biblical narratives and are seen as props to further the plot. Narrative criticism and related literary-critical methods offer a lens through which to study and better understand them. Fresh insights into the theological message of a biblical text are the greatest reward of such efforts.

On the surface Asmodeus seems a shallow character used to explain Sarah's plight and occasion the reversals in the story: Tobit gets his son and his money back; Sarah gets a husband. Two families with

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36   Soll, Misfortune 215-216, investigates such evil from the perspective of Vladimir Propp's studies of the folktale. Propp's Function 8 relates to villainy/lack (Tob 1:20; 2:10; 3:8).

37   Levine, Diaspora 105 and 107.

38   See Soll, Book 243.

endogamous roots are united. The angel triumphs; the demon is banished and bound. Families *living* in exile benefit from a demon *sent* into exile. However, the final verdict on the characterization of Asmodeus the demon remains open to refinement. The tendency is to characterize him as an evil spirit, a personification of unbridled anger, jealousy, and lust. That is much *my* reading of the text. Yet Beate Ego raises a characterization of Asmodeus that piques one's curiosity. Her study made me ask myself: "Can a love-sick demon merit at least a little sympathy?" Remember, unrequited love is a great theme in world literature. Though not "Beauty and the Beast" outright, a vitriolic reading of Asmodeus *could* be balanced with some compassion, perhaps. Compassion is a virtue in the book of Tobit. The dead must be buried with dignity, whatever the cost. Almsgiving is a timeless virtue. Husbands and wives argue but stay together. Adult children care for their parents. The bed motif offers a merism of life: from the cradle to the grave, the lot of all creation. However one reads Asmodeus in the book of Tobit, the demon emerges as a less than minor character when examined more closely.

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IV.

Angels in Early Christian Narratives on the Resurrection of Jesus
Canonical and Apocryphal Texts

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The empty tomb stories in early Christian Gospels try to express in narrative what texts like 1Cor 15:3-5 say in the form of the creed: *The crucified Jesus of Nazareth has been risen from the dead.* The subject is an event which indeed had an unpreceded historical effect, though its incomprehensible origin remains in the free act of God. If the resurrection of Jesus points to God's intervention in this world, then this will open various possibilities to have angels play an important role as agents within these stories or as commenting on this event. In this contribution I would like to describe how the various resurrection accounts portray and develop angel-(like) figures and their functions in these contexts. I shall start with the probably most ancient „empty tomb story", the original ending of the Gospel of Mark (Mark 16:1-8). Both other Synoptics, Matthew and Luke, offer clearly more elaborated Easter accounts, which are at least partly based on Mark; moreover, Luke–Acts presents two short narratives on Jesus' Ascension. How do the roles of angels develop in these narratives in comparison to the Gospel of Mark and what are the backgrounds of these developments? But the evolution does not stop with the Synoptics: Not only the Gospel of John probably presupposes the Synoptics (at least Mark and Luke), but extra-canonical texts are interesting in this respect, too: While the secondary ending of Mark (Mark 16:9-20; probably 2nd century CE) is not important with regard to our topic, we do see interesting developments in apocryphal texts of that time, e.g. in the *Gospel of Peter*.

1. Mark 16:1-8

The difficulties regarding the ending of the Gospel of Mark have been well known for a long time. Is it possible that a literary works does end with the word γάρ? Is it imaginable (and probable) that at its ending a Gospel recounts the fear of women, who do not dare to report their

experience?[1] How people took offence at on this ending since earliest times is shown by the various continuations which were appended later. But even the preceding scene (Mark 16:1-8) has its difficulty: What part do the women mentioned here play? Without expressing it explicitly, from the very beginning the text does imply that their behaviour is foolish: After Jesus' announcements of his passion and resurrection (8:31-33; 9:31 and 10:32-34), after the confession of the centurion, who acknowledges under the cross that the „suffering righteous one" (Ps 22; 69), „the suffering servant" (Isa 42) Jesus of Nazareth is „the Son of God", there is, at least according to Mark, no need to buy odoriferous oil and embalm the corpse of Jesus (with the intention to preserve it) (Mark 16:2).[2] Anyone acting like this could, according to Mark, impossibly have understood the true significance of Jesus' death.[3] But even the consecutive action does not seem to be calculated properly: Only on their way to the tomb the women realise that it is closed by a large stone (Mark 16:3). To the women's surprise, however, they find the stone already rolled away when they arrive at the tomb.

The description of the scene taking place in the tomb is remarkable: Why does the text not write of an „angel" whom the women encounter, but of a νεανίσκος, a „young man," who is seated on the right, instead? A look at ancient parallels, where angels are described as youths shows the extraordinariness of the Markan account:[4]

1. According to the fifth chapter of the book of Tobit G[II], Tobit addresses the angel Rafael three times as νεανίσκος (Tob 5:5,7,10 G[II]; see also; Old Latin: *iuvenis*). On the one hand this, of course, expresses the fact that Rafael actually appears to him as a young man. But moreover a second aspect can be observed, which the text (G[II] as well as Old Latin) emphasizes at the end of 5:4: Tobit addresses Rafael as a „young man" because *he* – contrary to the reader – is ignorant of the fact that he speaks to an angel.

2. A passage in Flavius Josephus' *Antiquitates* (*AJ* 5,8,2 § 277) is frequently mentioned as a parallel, too: Within the framework of Josephus' description of the Simson-cycle the announcement of Simson's birth, made by an angel, is told:[5] *When the woman was all alone in*

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1   On these problems see also, e.g., Giesen, Auferstandene.

2   On the anointment as „analogieloses Vorgang" see Pesch, Markusevangelium 529-530. Lührmann, Markusevangelium 269, speaks of a twofold anachronism: Jesus is already embalmed according to Mark 14:3-9 and after 15:42-47 also buried.

3   See also Schenke, Markusevangelium 351, who, however, points to the women's love as their motive of conduct.

4   The parallels are used, most of the time without any substantial comparisons, to show that Mark supposedly reflects similar ancient-Jewish customs.

5   Translation according to H. Clementz.

the house, an angel of God (ἄγγελος) *appeared unto her in the shape of a slen-
der and beautiful youth* (νεανίας) *….* The difference to Mark's description
is obvious; Josephus first lets it be known that an angel appears to Sim-
son's mother – and only hereafter describes his appearance. In Mark,
however, the word „angel" does not occur in this context.

3. The third chapter of 2Maccabees tells about an attempt made by
Heliodoros, King Seleucus' chancellor, to confiscate the Temple's treas-
ury. When Heliodoros and his guards walk into the treasury chamber,
however, they become witness to a tremendous epiphany (2Macc 3:24):
Not only does a horse with a „gruesome rider" with golden weapons
and in golden armor appear which is charging furiously at Heliodoros
and kicking at him with its hoofs, there are also two νεανίαι „filled with
enormous power, in radiant beauty and majestically clothed" men-
tioned, who incessantly whip Heliodoros severely, until he falls to the
ground (2Macc 3:26-27). While Heliodoros lies there to die, the high
priest Onias begs to safe his life, whereupon both young men appear to
Heliodoros once again[6] and reveal to him why his life is being spared
(2Macc 3:33-34). In contrast to the first two examples, 2Maccabees does
not explicitly call these young men „angels", but yet clarifies much
more distinctly than Mark does that they must be angels. They are ac-
companying the „great Epiphany", that is staged by God who is de-
scribed as „Lord of the Spirits"(2Macc 3:24) here.

4. In this light also some passages from the visions of the *Shepherd of
Hermas* are possibly of interest.[7] I choose just two significant examples.

Vision II 4 tells of a dream of Hermas: *While I slept however, brothers,
I received a revelation from a beautiful young man* (ὑπὸ νεανίσκου εὐειδε-
στάτου), who spoke to me: „*Who do you think is the old woman from whom
you received the letter?*". No angel is explicitly mentioned here. But be-
cause the passage tells of a revelation, (at least) the reader understands
that the young man mentioned must in fact be an angel. But maybe the
text consciously speaks of a νεανίσκος (and not an „angel") here. This
seems probable when taking a look at Vision III: Here, next to the „old
woman", whom Hermas takes for the Sibyl at first but who is revealed
in Vision II 4 as being the „church", six young men turn up, who build
a magnificent tower on the old woman's command. Then Hermas asks
what this tower stands for. Again, he is told that it is the „church".
However, the following is of interest: Even though the context – be-
cause all this is a vision! – makes clear that we are confronted with
heavenly creatures, Hermas wants to know who the six youths are who

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6   2Macc 3:33 explicitly refers to 3:26 – the same young men are concerned here!
7   Text according to: Lindemann / Paulsen, Väter.

have built the tower (III 4). Only then is explained: „*Those are the holy <u>Angels of God</u>, the first created; To them the Lord has given his whole creation…*"(III 4).

This means, however, that the scene in the Gospel of Mark has an exceptional position within early Jewish and Christian literature: Mark never explicitly states that the νεανίσκος must be an angel. The reader can only deduce it from his description (and maybe from his message): He is clothed with a white garment (on white clothing of angels see also 1En 71:1; TLevi 8:2; TJob 3:1; 4:1; 5:2; 2Macc 11:8 and others). White clothing was mentioned in Mark for the last time in 9:3 at Jesus' transfiguration, where it was made clear that the Transfigured One emits a glimpse of God's glory formerly concealed within himself. The motif of the „frightening" women (16:5) as well as the opening words of the angel's annunciation „Do not be alarmed!" (both times the verb ἐκθαμβέομαι is used) also indicate that this event must be an epiphany, or more precisely an angelophany. The contents of the angel's speech is plain, but Christologically speaking highly important. Mark 16:6 does not speak about Jesus as the Christ or the Son of God, but rather as Jesus *of Nazareth* (see also Mark 1:9; 10:47; 14:68) to whom the words „the crucified one" are attributed.[8] This *human being* Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified, is now said to have been risen. Through the use of the passive ἠγέρθη the acting of God with regard to the deceased Jesus is emphasized. This risen Jesus, however, is no longer in this place, but goes forth to Galilee, the region where the Jesus story had started according to the Gospel of Mark. There he will appear to women and disciples. Do the closing words „just as he told you" imply a hidden critique? In fact, women and disciples should have known from Jesus' words what would happen. However, even in spite of the epiphany they still do not understand. This might be the key to the question why the text uses νεανίσκος instead of ἄγγελος to refer to the angel. With regard to this question, I suspect that the text has a double meaning: The women only „see" a young man, but do not understand that they are encountered by an angel, who brings a heavenly message to them. Because of this they react in a completely wrong way and do not tell anyone anything about their experience. The reader, however, understands that a revelation account is being told. So the angel's words are addressed to him. The fact that these women fail to react to this revelation appropriately urges the reader to complete the Gospel's open end with his own act of proclamation.

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8   Gnilka, Evangelium 342, is right when he writes that Jesus here is „gänzlich im Hinblick auf sein irdisches Schicksal beschrieben."

A completely different explanation as to why the text speaks of a νεανίσκος and not of an ἄγγελος, has been given by M. Meyer, who connects the canonical text of Mark's Gospel to fragments of the so-called „secret Gospel of Mark".[9] According to Meyer in the „secret Gospel of Mark" a sub-plot can be detected which is not to be found in the canonical text. In this sub-plot a νεανίσκος plays a role which can be compared with the role of „beloved disciple" in the gospel of John.[10] The line of action reconstructed by Meyer begins in Mark 10:17-22, the account about the rich man, who asks Jesus what he needs to do in order to inherit eternal life. Meyer suggests that this young man is the same whose resuscitation is mentioned in fragment 1 of the „secret Gospel of Mark" (to be placed between Mark 10:34 and 35).[11] According to Meyer the rich man's repudiation of Jesus narrated in Mark 10:22 has driven him to his death; then his resuscitation by Jesus is narrated, which leads him to respond to Jesus' love (Mark 10:21) with love. Now the young man is initiated by Jesus into the secret of the Kingdom of God. Moreover, the description of his clothing with the words περιβεβλημένος σινδόνα ἐπὶ γυμνοῦ (secret Mark frg. 1) corresponds to Mark 14:51 where the young man appears again. Meyer finds a further indication of the young man in the second fragment of „the secret Gospel of Mark", which must be inserted in Mk 10:46. The text then would turn out to be as follows: „And he comes to Jericho. The sister of the youth whom Jesus loved was there, along with his mother and Salome, but Jesus did not receive them (fem.). And as he was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a large crowd Bartimaeus son of Timaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the side of the road."[12] Finally, according to Meyer, the mysterious passage in Mark 14:51-52 tells that the beloved young man flees

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9   Cf. Meyer, *Secret Gospel.* – The very obscure circumstances under which the „secret Gospel of Mark" was discovered need not be repeated here. The voices of those who are convinced that this text is a forgery have not become any more silent in the past years than those who actually want to see traces of an antique apocryphon in the alleged Letter of Clemens of Alexandria, discovered by M. Smith. I myself am very sceptical with regard to this text and have argued my point in my contribution Nicklas, Traditions about Jesus in Apocryphal Gospels. – For a text of „secret Mark" cf. M. Smith, Clement of Alexandria, and Lührmann, Fragmente 182-185.

10   Further on this also Meyer, *Secret Mark.* – For a critical review of Meyer's arguments see also Evans, Mark 8-16, 427-428.

11   This connection, however, can only be established through an artifice: Meyer, *Secret Gospel* 122-123, has to insert the νεανίσκος of the Matthean parallel (Matt 19:20-21) into Mark's text. According to him Matthew has preserved the original wording of the pericope here. Furthermore, he has to decide for the weakly attested reading πλούσιος in Mark 10:17 (see also Luke 18:18,23). Moreover, the words of the rich man ἐκ νεότητός μου, which could implicate that he is *no longer* young, are used to show that he is still young.

12   Meyer, *Secret Gospel* 125.

at Jesus' arrest, just like the other disciples had done, and thereby even left behind his garments, which represented the clothing of those who prepared for baptism. The νεανίσκος in the tomb (Mark 16:5-7) is then not to be interpreted as an angel, but rather as the beloved youth, whose story began in Mark 10:17-22.[13] Again he wears the ritual garment, which, however, is now white like after baptism, which reminds us of the justified ones of the Apocalypse (Rev 7:9); „These white robes reserved for glorified Christians recall the garb of initiates into some of the mystery religions of antiquity: in the mysteries of Isis, those of the Orphics, the Andanian mysteries, and the like, the faithful werde commonly dressed in white linen."[14] While the women flee and do not disperse the youth's message, he stands for the future of the belief in the crucified and risen Jesus of Nazareth. As fascinating as Meyer's interpretation might seem to be at first glance, as severe are its problems (apart from the question whether the „secret Gospel of Mark" rightly may be counted as an ancient text instead of a forgery manufactured much later). This is already visible in the issue whether fragment 1 of „secret Mark" really can be connected to Mark 10:17-22 (see fn. 11, above). But Meyer also does not explain why Mark 16:1-8 shows all the elements of epiphany mentioned above and where the young man found his insight after his flight according to Mark 14:51-52. Furthermore, it remains unclear why Mark 16:5 presents the young man without (definite) article. Ought the text not imply that the women saw τὸν νεανίσκον, when it would concern the already known figure from 10:17-22 and 14:51-52?

2. Matt 28:1-8

Matthew's empty tomb story differs from Mark's account in numerous ways.[15] Here women – in this case Mary Magdalene and „the other" Mary – also go on their way to the tomb. But Matthew does not seem to be interested in a negative evaluation of both women. He focuses mainly on the eschatological significance of what happened at Jesus' resurrection. Because of this, gaps are filled and questions answered where the Markan text leaves things open. Surely even Matthew does not describe the actual event of Jesus' resurrection. However, the angel

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13   See Meyer, *Secret Gospel* 128-130.

14   Meyer, *Secret Gospel* 129. On the supposed connections between early Christianity and ancient Mystery cults, which can be derived therefrom, see also Meyer, Youths.

15   More elaborately on the relations of both versions compare Luz, Evangelium 26-28, 397-400.

not only reveals the significance of the events to the women, he also embodies God's interaction with the world. This is already expressed through the motif of „the great earthquake" (see also Zech 14:4-5; on earthquakes as an eschatological sign see also Mark 13:8; Matt 24:7; Luke 21:11; Rev 6:12; 8:5; 11:13,19; 16:18; at the death of Jesus Matt 27:54; as a sign of God's wrath Ez 38:19).[16] But maybe the earthquake points even more specifically towards resurrection. In fact, at least according to the LXX version, the vision on the resurrection of the dead bones of Israel told in Ez 37:1-14 is also introduced by an earthquake (Ez 37:7 LXX). But most of all Matt 28 shows a correlation to Matt 27:51-52, where the trembling of the earth at Jesus' death is connected to the opening of the graves and resuscitation of many saints.

With regard to our topic it is interesting that Matt does not simply speak of an angel but rather of an „angel of the Lord" [17], who already played a part on three different, rather decisive occasions in the Gospel. The angel of the Lord, who according to Matt 1:20; 2:13 and 19 appeared repeatedly to Joseph in a dream, namely to convince him to recognize Jesus as his son, to safe him from Herodes' wrath and to return from Egypt to Israel, now descends from heaven, rolls away the stone from the tomb and sits down. Can we appreciate this as a sign of triumph over death?[18]

This angel is also described more thoroughly than the „youth" in the Gospel according to Mark:

Mark 16:5   ... νεανίσκον καθήμενον ἐν τοῖς δεξιοῖς περιβεβλημένον στολὴν λευκήν
Matt 28:3   ἦν δὲ ἡ εἰδέα αὐτοῦ ὡς ἀστραπὴ καὶ τὸ ἔνδυμα αὐτοῦ λευκὸν ὡς χιών.

The words „like a flash of lightning" find their most significant parallel in the portrayal of an angel in Dan 10:6 LXX; καὶ τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ ὡσεὶ ὅρασις ἀστραπῆς. An interesting parallel to the description of the garments as „white like snow" we find in 1Enoch, where in chapter 14

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16 Gnilka, Matthäusevangelium 493, speaks of a „theophanic element", Wiefel, Evangelium 489, about a „theophanic-cosmic signal". – Nevertheless I regard it improbable that the (image of an) earthquake is used here as a topos to represent a miracle of deliverance, as Sand, Evangelium 581, argues. Frankemölle, Matthäuskommentar 519, is correct when he argues that the text explicitly notes this (γάρ!) and paints the angel's descendance as cause of the earthquake.

17 Davies / Allison, Gospel 665 n. 20, however, emphasize that the usage of the term „amgel of the Lord" does not imply that the text speaks her about „God in visible form".

18 Cf., e.g., Fiedler, Matthäusevangelium 424. – Sand, Evangelium 581, calls this „hoheitliche[s] Verhalten".

God's throne is depicted:[19] "And from beneath the throne were issuing streams of flaming fire. It was difficult to look at it. And the Great Glory was sitting upon it – as for his gown, which was shining more brightly than the sun, it was whiter than any snow" (14:19-20).[20] The fact that his garment „is as white as snow" thus shows that the angel directly comes from the spheres of the glory of the Lord. And again one may find connections to other passages in the Gospel of Matthew: The comparison with a „flash of lightning" is also used in Mt 24:27 to describe the eschatological coming of the Son of Man.

According to Matthew the angel opens the tomb and makes, through his appearance, the guards tremble and fall down to the ground like dead men. Then he reveals the message of Jesus' resurrection to the women, who here become, quite differently from the Gospel of Mark, messengers of faith (Matt 28:8).[21] But although he is attributed as angel *of the Lord*, it is not said, that he himself causes Jesus' resurrection[22] – the text avoids describing what happens in the tomb itself. Nevertheless he is described in more active terms than the „young man" in the Gospel of Mark. His task, however, is not to bring Jesus back to life again, he mainly focusses (1) on taking away all obstacles – the enemies[23] as well as the big stone – which might hinder the resurrection and (2) revealing it to the women. But the fact that this is done by an angel, whose attributes is describe him as originating from God's glory and who is even assigned as „Angel of the Lord", also shows how early Christianity emphasizes that the creed in Jesus' resurrection cannot be attributed to one's own inspiration, but must be understood in the sense of a revelation initiated by God. Furthermore, the circumstances surrounding this revelation indicatethat this resurrection is acted out by God and must be understood in light of its eschatological significance.

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19   Further parallels: Ps 51:9; Isa 1:18; Lam 4:7; Dan 7:9; JosAs 16:8,18.
20   Translation: Isaac, Enoch 21. – The background is Ez 1:26-28. Further on this passage, compare Nickelsburg, Enoch 264.
21   However, they do not contain a „missionary assignment" in the strict sense of the word, as Luz, Evangelium 26-28, 405, emphasizes. But compare Matt 28:19-20!
22   Luz, Evangelium 26-28, 402, rightly states: „Wie und wann Jesus das Grab verlassen hat, erfahren wir nicht."
23   The fact that the guards are now seemingly dead, is of course consciously formulated as contrast to Jesus' resurrection, as for example Sand, Evangelium 581, states.

3. Luke 24:1-11 and Acts 1:9-11

The empty tomb story in the Gospel of Luke is clearly closer connected to the Markan narrative than the episode of Matthew's Gospel.[24] Concerning our question it is interesting that Luke – like Matthew – does not speak of a νεανίσκος sitting in the grave, but of „two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning" (καὶ ἰδοὺ ἄνδρες δύο ἐπέστησαν αὐταῖς ἐν ἐσθῆτι ἀστραπτούσῃ), who approach the women. Once again the description of the clothes makes one aware that the text is concerned with superterrestrial beings here; again it does not speak about „angels".[25]

Something similar can be found in the account of Jesus' ascent according to Acts (Acts 1:9-11). While the parallel narration in Luke 24:50-52 tells that the disciples prostrate before Jesus, who is taken up into heaven, and then return to Jerusalem with great joy, Acts 1:10 once again introduces two men in white clothes who explain to the disciples who are completely concentrating on the sky,[26] that Jesus will return the same way he was taken up. Both *pairs* – both the „men" in the grave as well as those at Jesus' Ascension – are usually considered to be explanatory angels, *angeli interpretes*, who want to correct the behaviour of the addressed persons particularly in Acts 1:10-11.[27] But is this really the case? In their commentary on the Bezan text of Acts J. Rius-Camps and J. Read-Heimerdinger have proposed a highly interesting different interpretation of the scene which not only explains why Luke speaks of „men" instead of „angels", but also clarifies why the text speaks of *two* men (and not just one like Mark and Matthew).[28]

Rius-Camps and Read-Heimerdinger point to the connection of the passage to the transfiguration-scene. In all three passages two „otherworldly" figures appear and in all three cases they are also introduced in the same manner.

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24 It is not possible to discuss the question to which extent Luke is critically concerned with the idea that the risen Jesus is an angel-like being. For more information see: Fletcher-Louis, Luke-Acts 63-70.

25 This has been seen regularly: Cf., e.g., Fitzmyer, Gospel 1544.

26 The text uses the verb ἀτενίζω (instead of βλέπω), through which a strenuous, concentrated gaze is being expressed.

27 See, e.g., Fitzmyer, Acts 210, relating to Acts 1:10. Regarding the correction of behaviour see also Pesch, Apostelgeschichte 1, 73. – Ernst, Evangelium 652, speaks about a „leisen Vorwurf an die Frauen."

28 Rius-Camps / Read-Heimerdinger, Message 89-90. What both authors state with regard to the Bezan text, can as well be used on the Alexandrinian text, because there are no important differences between both texts with respect to our question.

Luke 9:30	καὶ ἰδοὺ ἄνδρες δύο συνελάλουν αὐτῷ,
Luke 24:4	... καὶ ἰδοὺ ἄνδρες δύο ἐπέστησαν ...
Acts 1:10	καὶ ἰδοὺ ἄνδρες δύο ...

From the parallel introductions Rius-Camps and Read-Heimerdinger conclude that the text speaks about the same characters here, but only Luke 9:30 tells who is concerned: οἵτινες ἦσαν Μωϋσῆς καὶ Ἠλίας.

Moses and Elijah thus appear in different important passages of the Luke-Acts as representatives of the Tora to confirm that Jesus' interpretation of his Messianism corresponds to God's Plan as indicated by the scriptures: „Thus, the repeated perdictions of Jesus concerning his passion, death and resurrection, just as his insistence on explaining the Scriptures once he had come back to life, are validated by the very characters who personify the divine word."[29]

This surprising interpretation is worth to be considered more in detail; (1) It is difficult to answer the question how weighty the argument is that the „heavenly" figures are introduced in all three cases in the same way while hardly any importance must be given to the fact that all three are also clothed in „characteristic garments of those who already belong to the divine sphere"[30.] Of course, not only Moses and Elijah, but also angels belong to this sphere – and in this light one might consider that on all three occasions the descriptions of the heavenly figures differ at least in details:

Luke 9:31	οἱ ὀφθέντες ἐν δόξῃ
Luke 24:4	ἐν ἐσθῆτι ἀστραπτούσῃ
Acts 1:10	ἐν ἐσθήσεσι λευκαῖς

But nevertheless this does not answer the question if the common declaration of „two men" may only be ascribed to coincidence (or possibly to Lukan style of writing). Luke speaks of angels on numerous other occasions, but there he names them as such (see Luke 1:11; 1:26-38; 2:9-15; 8:26 etc). So Luke 24:4 and Acts 1:10 are clearly differing from other angelophanies in the Gospel of Luke, though connected to Luke 9:30-31 by the common introduction.

(2) However, the question has to be asked why Luke does not identify both figures in the grave more clearly as he did with Moses and Elijah at Jesus' Ascension. Only in a very scrutinous reading of the text the words καὶ ἰδοὺ ἄνδρες δύο point the reader to a possible connection between the figures occuring time and again. In this regard the difference at least between the scenes of transfiguration and ascension (according to Acts 1:9-11) is striking. According to Lk 9:33 at least Peter

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29   Rius-Camps / Read-Heimerdinger, Message 90.
30   Rius-Camps / Read-Heimerdinger, Message 90.

immediately recognizes the heavenly figures as Moses and Elijah, while in Acts 1,10 both remain not only unnamed by the narrator, but (obviously) also unknown to the disciples.

(3) Perhaps the main argument against Rius-Camps / Read-Heimerdinger is that Luke 24:23 (even in the Bezan text) describes the women's experience at the grave as an ὀπτασία ἀγγέλων, a fact both authors do not mention. But even this is no compulsatory reason to dismiss the Moses-Elijah-thesis, because it is not the narrator of Luke's Gospel who speaks in 24:23, but the two disciples walking to Emmaus, who evidently have not (yet) understood the significance of the events.

The arguments mentioned above thus cannot refute Rius-Camps and Read-Heimerdinger's thesis, but in my opinion they at least make it quite improbable.

Whichever way one might decide: The function of both heavenly creatures in Jesus's grave and at his ascension is to criticise the behaviour of the addressed persons and to interpret what has happened.

Contrary to the parallel accounts of Mark and Matthew the heavenly creatures' assignment is restricted to that: Neither Luke 24:5b-7 nor Acts 1:11 give an explicit assignment to the persons addressed.

4. The Gospel of John

In the Easter accounts of the Gospel of John angels only have a very marginal role to play. Here it is Mary Magdalene alone, who first comes to the grave and recognizes that the stone has been taken away (John 20:1). She, however, does not receive a revelation, but she is the one who informs Peter and the Beloved Disciple, who both hurry to the grave. Although the Beloved Disciple reaches the grave earlier than Peter he does not enter it. But while Peter just enters the grave and *sees* the vernicle and stripes of linen lying there,[31] the other disciple enters, *sees and believes* (John 20:8). The beloved disciple thus does not need an angel to interpret the visible signs of Jesus' resurrection – he obtains faith on his own. In this light also the following scene concerning Mary Magdalene (John 20:11ff.) must surely be interpreted: She also has only seen the empty grave, but not made a confession of faith. However, when she bents over to look into the tomb (20:11), she also sees something: Contrary to Peter and the Beloved disciple she „sees" two angels in white; one is sitting in the place where Jesus' head has been laid and the other where his feet have been placed. Contrary to both Mark and

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31   Very probably the text resembles the Lazarus-story (John 11) here.

Luke John unambiguously speaks of angels here. This is why the description may be quite concise. The most significant difference to the Synoptic accounts, however, consists in the fact that these angels do not give any interpretation of the events, but only address Mary with the question: „Woman why are you weeping?".

While the beloved disciple became a believer after seeing just the linen cloth and vernicle, Mary reacts with almost the same words as in 20:2 when she just found the empty tomb:

20:2   ἦραν τὸν κύριον ἐκ τοῦ μνημείου
            καὶ οὐκ οἴδαμεν ποῦ ἔθηκαν αὐτόν.
20:13   ἦραν τὸν κύριόν μου,
            καὶ οὐκ οἶδα ποῦ ἔθηκαν αὐτόν

Through this the angels' task is actually accomplished. Mary turns round and sees Jesus, but does not recognize him immediately. Only when he calls her name, is she able to overcome her ignorance, and recognize him as her „master" (20:16). Now she can proclaim that she has seen the Lord (20:18a). How can this different role of the angels in John's Gospel be explained? The answer is rather obvious: according to the Gospel of John only Jesus, the Christ and Son of God (John 20:30-31), the Incarnate Word of God (1:1.14) is the distinguished Revealer.[32] Meeting him makes it possible to obtain faith. Seeing him means seeing the Glory of God. Already in the scene of Lazarus' resurrection Jesus reveals to Martha that he is „the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25). So it would be inconsistent if something as significant as the resurrection of Jesus would have to be interpreted by angels and not by Jesus, the Revealer himself.

If one wants to understand the Gospel of John as actually playing with its Synoptic pre-texts (most probably Mark and Luke), then the story may surely be seen as a sly dig at the idea that „angels" (like in Mark and Luke) may have any significance for the revelation of Jesus (or its interpretation). The tradition about angels at the tomb is by no means given up, but the angels here only have the function to show Mary's perseverence in misinterpreting the given situation – a misinterpretation which can only be overcome by the Revealer himself.

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32 How far John sees Jesus as God's Revealer can also be seen in 1:51, one of the few other passages in John's Gospel where angels „occur": here Jesus prophecies to the disciples that they will see heaven open and God's angel descending and ascending on the Son of Man. The allusion to Gen 28:12, the scene on Jacob and the ladder to heaven, is clear. The scene is interpreted in different ways: I find the most probable interpretation the one that sees the Son of Man – like the ladder – to be a bridge between heaven and earth. Through him revelation is possible, which is made clear by the image of the angel's decension and ascension. Further (also on the history of research) see Nicklas, Ablösung 190-197.

5. The *Gospel of Peter* – Mark 16:4 *k* (Bobbiensis) – *Ascension of Isaiah* 3:17-18

While the Gospel according to John assigns only a marginal role to the angels at the tomb, the apocryphal *Gospel of Peter* not only further develops several aspects of the Synoptical texts, but shows even a new dimension, which is not found in the canonical Gospels.[33]

5.1. Like Matthew the *Gospel of Peter* tells of the guarding of Jesus' tomb (V.29-49), which is accomplished not only by a centurion named Petronius and his soldiers, but (apparently) also by the Jewish elders and scribes (V.31). In the night before the Sunday, which is here already called „the day of the Lord", this guardians witness Jesus' resurrection where two angels play a decisive role. The text runs as follows:

V.36 καὶ εἶδον ἀνοιχθέντας τοὺς οὐράνους καὶ δύο ἄνδρας κατέλθοντας ἐκεῖθε πολὺ φέγγος ἔχοντας καὶ ἐγγίσαντας τῷ τάφῳ. 37 ὁ δὲ λίθος ἐκεῖνος ὁ βεβλημένος ἐπὶ τῇ θύρᾳ ἀφ᾽ ἑαυτοῦ κυλισθεὶς ἐπεχώρησε παρὰ μέρος καὶ ὁ τάφος ἠνοίγη καὶ ἀμφότεροι οἱ *νεανίσκοι* εἰσῆλθον.

36 And they saw the heavens opened, and two men descend from there in a great brightness and approach the tomb. 37 But that stone which laid (there) at the entrance started of itself to roll and move sidewards, and the tomb was opened and both young men entered.

After it is related that both guardians waken the centurion and the leaders of the „Jews" in order to tell what has happened, the whole group becomes witness of the subsequent scene:

V.39 καὶ ἐξηγουμένων αὐτῶν ἃ εἶδον πάλιν ὁρῶσιν ἐξελθόντας ἀπὸ τοῦ τάφου τρεῖς ἄνδρας καὶ τοὺς δύο τὸν ἕνα ὑπορθοῦντας καὶ σταυρὸν ἀκολουθοῦντα αὐτοῖς. 40 καὶ τῶν μὲν δύο τὴν κεφαλὴν χωροῦσαν μέχρι τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, τοῦ δὲ χειραγωγουμένου ὑπ᾽ αὐτῶν ὑπερβαίνουσαν τοὺς οὐρανούς.

39 And while they were telling what they had seen, again they saw three men coming out from the tomb, and two of them supporting one, and a cross following them, 40 and the head of the two reaching to heaven, but that of the one who was led by them overpassing the heavens.

The scene ends with a voice from heaven asking: „Have you preached to Those who sleep?", whereupon the response „yes" can be heard from the cross (V.41-42).

The differences as compared to the Synoptics are clear: This scene shows only very superficial relationship to Matthew's account – connections can be found with regard to the guarding of the grave and the descent of one (or in *GosPet* specifically two) angel(s) (but: Matt 28:2: ἄγγελος κυρίου – καταβαίνω; GosPet 36: δύο ἄνδρες – κατέρχομαι). Even the description of both the „men" from heaven, which of course once again

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33   Regarding text and translations see Kraus / Nicklas, Petrusevangelium 32-53.

functions as an indication to describe them as „heavenly beings", differs from the Synoptics. However, there are other Biblical texts which speak about the φέγγος, i.e. the „brightness" or more specifically the „glance of light" or „radiance" of heavenly beings or accompanying epiphanies of heavenly beings (2Sam 22:13; Hab 3:4; Ez 1:4,13,27,28; 10:4; 43:2 all LXX). – Of particular interest are those texts which connect the glory of God with „brightness" as for instance Ez 10:4 LXX: καὶ ἔπλησεν τὸν οἶκον ἡ νεφέλη καὶ ἡ αὐλὴ ἐπλήσθη τοῦ φέγγους τῆς δόξης κυρίου (*and the cloud filled the house and the court was filled from the brightness of the glory of the Lord*) .

Also contrary to the angel in Matthew, both men in the *Gospel of Peter* do not roll away the stone in front of the door – this happens on its own. Unlike the angel in Matthew they also do not take a seat on the stone, but – now named νεανίσκοι like the angel in Mark – enter the grave instead. This text also does not tell the actual event of Jesus' resurrection; it does not dare to describe what takes place in the tomb.

Nevertheless *these* angels, who now come out of the tomb to lead the risen one, whose head overpasses the heavens, out of his grave, obviously do not play the part of *angeli interpretes*. Moreover, they indeed seem to demonstrate God's acting in behalf of the crucified Jesus.

The role of these two angels thus does not find any correspondence in the canonical texts mentioned above. However, there are interesting parallels with two other Christian Apocrypha:

– The Latin version of Mark's Gospel in Codex Bobbiensis (*k*) inserts the following text in Mark 16:4:[34]

> subito autem ad horam tertiam tenebrae diei factae sunt per totum orbem terrae et descenderunt de coelis angeli et surgent (lies: surgente) in claritate vivi dei simul ascenderunt cum eo, et continuo lux facta est.
>
> *Suddenly, however, at the third hour, during the day a darkness arose on the whole of the earth, and angels descended from heaven, and after he was risen in the Glory of the living God, they ascended together with him, and immediately it became light (again).*

– Probably even closer to the *GosPet* is a short fragment of the *Ascensio Isaiae*, which speaks about resurrection and ascension of the „Beloved", i.e. Christ. Regarding the context: Beliar is full of wrath against Isaiah, who revealed a number of things, which are now enumerated.

3,14: And the twelve who were with Him should be offended because of Him: and the watch of those who watched the sepulchre 15 And the descent of the angel of the Christian Church, which is in the heavens, whom He will summon in the last days 16 And that (Gabriel) the angel of the Holy Spirit, and Michael, the chief of the holy angels, on the third day will open the sepul-

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34   See also Harnack, Bruchstücke 57.

chre 17 And the Beloved sitting on their shoulders will come forth and send out His twelve disciples (Translation R.H. Charles).

The roles of the angels in these texts, which contrary to their canonical counterparts connect resurrection and ascension unambiguously, show small differences in details. What they, however, all have in common is the fact that the angels escort the Risen One into heaven. While in Mark 16:4 *k* the angels clearly form a kind of escort for the Risen One and *AscIsa* also points to the Risen One's triumph, in the *Gospel of Peter* the angels need to „support" Jesus. Comparable images are found in several ancient texts that express the idea of angels escorting the deceased ones into the otherworld:[35] For instance, in some Greek texts (for example *Od.* 24:1-15; Sophocles, *Aj.* 831-832; Euripides, *Alc.* 743-744 Diogenes Laertius 8:31), Hermes, the messenger (ἄγγελος!) of the Gods, functions as escort for the deceased, but even Charon, usually the ferryman for the dead to cross-over the river Styx into Hades, actually in some cases takes this role. The idea of the deceased's soul being escorted by a guardian daimon to judgement and finally to Hades, is known ever since Plato (Phaidon 107c-108c; see also Menander, in Clement v. Alexandria, *str.* 5,130).[36] Also relevant are the following ancient Jewish and early Christian texts:[37] In this respect Luke 16:22a – the scene which testifies of poor Lazarus „being carried into Abraham's lap by angels" after death – most certainly is the best known text. Furthermore several passages from the *Testament of Abraham* (*Test. Abr.*, long recension; 11,5;12,1-3; 13,12-13), the *Apocalypse of Zephanja* (*Apoc.Zeph.* 4,1-7) or the *Apocalypse of Moses* (*Apoc.Mos.* 37,3-6) should be mentioned.

However, the question remains unanswered why the angels according to the *GosPet* need to „support" the Risen One. Possibly this is best explained by the fact that he, according to the *GosPet* 19, has lost his δύναμις, his strength. This should not be misunderstood in a docetic manner, as Thomas Hieke rightly argues: „Die ‚"Kraft' an dieser Stelle [ist] auch nicht ein Äquivalent für Gott, sondern die Kraft des Herrn (Jesus), die Wunderwerke bewirkt, wie sie so oft im Neuen Testament beschrieben werden ... Sie ist es auch, die bewirkt, dass der Herr in EvPetr trotz der Schmerzen schweigen kann – und erst, wenn diese

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35 On the following points see Mach, Entwicklungsstadien 148-159; Lehtipuu, Afterlife 198-205.

36 Even the sirenes could be described as escorts of the dead. In this context they often were portrayed as feathered creatures. For more information cf. Cumont, vents 70-75.

37 Here one has to be rather cautious: Many texts considered to be Jewish pseudepigrapha might not be free from later Christian influences.

Kraft ihn verlassen hat, kann er sterben."[38] It remains necessary to ask
what the background to the precise description of the angels is: The
relationship between the angels' and the Lord's magnitude is surely no
problem: The head of the risen Lord overpasses heavens, while the
heads of both angels are „only" reaching heaven: This certainly intends
to explain that the „Lord" is greater than any angel, how gigantic he
may ever be.[39] Maybe we can now answer just as easily the question
why the angels themselves are portrayed in such magnitude: At the
resurrection of the Lord the „greatest" angels must escort him: What
AscIsa 3:17 procures through the usage of names and attributions –
Michael as the „patron of the angels"! – the *Gospel of Peter* expresses
through their description as giants.[40]

5.2 The rest of the text of the *GosPet* is less problematic: When both
angels have disappeared together with the Resurrected One and (obvi-
ously) the cross – the text does not say how this happens – heaven is
reopened:

> V.44: καὶ ἔτι διανοουμένων αὐτῶν φαίνονται πάλιν ἀνοιχθέντες οἱ οὐρα-
> νοὶ καὶ ἄνθρωπός τις κατελθὼν καὶ εἰσελθὼν εἰς τὸ μνῆμα.
> *And while they (the guards; TN) were still deliberating, the heavens were again
> seen open, a man descends and enters the sepulchre.*

This man's function becomes clear in V.55: As Mary Magdalene comes
to the grave with her friends, she sees him as a young man, clothed in
shining garment, sitting in the middle of the grave. This angel now
takes the role of *angelus interpres*, like we saw in Mark and the other
Synoptics. He reveals to the woman what has happened with the
words „*Why have you come? Who do you seek? Not that man who was cruci-
fied? He is risen and gone hence. But if you do not believe, stoop down and see
the place where he lay: He is not (there). For he is risen and is gone to the place
from which has was sent*" (V.56). Hereupon they flee in fear – like in Mark
(V.57).

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38 Hieke, Petrusevangelium 106. For the Christology of the GosPet see also Myllykoski,
    Kraft.

39 Cf. Vaganay, Évangile 300.

40 Mara, Vangelo 101, points in this respect to Rev 10:1-3 and writes: „Le dimensioni
    gigantesche dei tre presonaggi e particolarmente del *Kýrios* non hanno, nel contesto,
    un semplice valore spettacolare, ma ontologico: come in Ap 10,1-3, la statura è indi-
    cazione della loro autorità in cielo e in terra."

6. Conclusion

In the narratives about Jesus' resurrection, be they empty tomb stories or ascension narratives, one can observe several very distinct roles of angels:

6.1 The fact that Jesus' resurrection is, in all texts, seen as an act of God, makes it necessary to explain its worldly consequences – the open and empty grave. This is why with the exception of John's Gospel, all texts discussed here know the role of the *angelus interpres*, which, however, at least according to Mark (and possibly also to GosPet) is not overall sucessful. Additionally, at least in some texts we find the element of (more or less direct) rebuke of the behaviour of the addressed persons (mainly Mark; Luke; Acts; GosPet) and, finally, in Mark and Matthew the angel charges the women with a certain (but very restricted) commission.

6.2 The actual act of Jesus' resurrection is withdrawn from the human eye. Therefore only a few texts allow to discuss (cautiously) whether the angel as God's representative resuscitates Jesus from the dead. In the canonical texts Matt 28 takes this aspect furthest. The descendance of the angel, who is assigned Angel of the Lord, is accompanied by signs of theophany, which underline the event's eschatological significance. To this at least one may consider the idea that the act of removing the stone not only serves the women's purpose to enter the tomb. It might as well symbolically stand for the opening of the grave for the crucified Jesus. Only the *Gospel of Peter* develops this theme further: Although even here the act of resuscitation remains hidden, the act of the angels, who descend from heaven and take Jesus from his grave, can be interpreted as a representation of God's acting upon the crucified Jesus.

6.3 Finally, in the three apocryphal texts mentioned above, one can establish yet another role of the angels. All three texts combine the idea of Jesus' resurrection and his ascent to heaven(s). Similar to ancient Jewish (and indirectly also pagan) ideas one can discern in all three texts angels who escort – partly as in a triumph – the Risen One into heaven(s).

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The Angel Gabriel according to Luke 1

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In the New Testament, (as, by the way, also in the Old Testament),[1] the angel Gabriel is mentioned only twice. Two consecutive narratives (Luke 1:5-25 and 1:26-28) describe him as a messenger of God who announces the birth of a child. He is not introduced. Because in 2:9-10,13 Luke leaves the angel, that brings God's message to the shepherds, unnamed (and does not call him Gabriel), we must assume that it was not the author of the third Gospel who put the name of God's messenger into his text, but adopted it from the tradition available to him. Those, however, who created the traditions in the background of the Lukan childhood story (or at least of one of the two stories mentioned) must have had a certain idea of the angel Gabriel.

It is therefore our task to find out what the addressees of the original, probably preliterary narratives knew about the angel Gabriel (1). Then, we will consider both narratives separately (2) and, finally, we will try to describe whether (and how) the image of the angel Gabriel has been altered in the process of transmission (3).

1. Gabriel in Early Judaism

Sources from the context of the New Testament do not tell us very much about the angel Gabriel.[2] So it is quite probable that oral and lost written traditions of ancient Judaism originally had a much more elaborate image of this figure than the sources available today say. What they tell us about Gabriel can be summarized in a few sentences:

1.1 In the book of Daniel (Dan 8:16 and 9:21) Gabriel appears as the angel who interprets Daniel's vision of the end of times. Insofar as these visions are concerned with future historical events, he has the same function as the unnamed *angelus interpres* of Zechariah's vision (Zech 1:9-12,14). The annotation that Gabriel appears to Daniel during

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1   Dan 8:16; 9:21.

2   Sänger, Γαβριήλ 554, states that „die Apokalyptiker in der zwischentestamentlichen Lit.(eratur) auch an G.(abriel) großes Interesse (zeigen)". This is, however, a bit exaggerated.

the time of prayer at the evening sacrifice (9:21) had its effects on the Lukan story (see below).

1.2 In early Jewish literature outside the Old Testament Gabriel is mentioned as part of a group of archangels, mostly four (1En 10:9; 40:9; 54:6; 71:8-9; 1QM 9:15-16), but sometimes more (grApcEsr 6:2). These archangels belong to God's entourage, to his special delegates.

1.2.1 Gabriel is one of four angels, Michael, Gabriel, Raphael and Uriel, who are active at the Flood and eliminate sinful humanity (1 Enoch 9). They appear as commissioned to exercise punishment (1En 10:9, 54:6).

1.2.2 Furthermore he is mentioned in another a group of four – Michael, Gabriel, Raphael and Sariel – who are considered to help in the battle against "the sons of darkness". Here he is seen as a decisive power (1QM 9:15-16).

1.2.3 Together with Michael, Raphael and Uriel he appears as a helper at the occasion of Adam's burial (ApcMos 40).

1.2.4 According to 2En 21:5 he raises Enoch to the seventh heaven (2En 21:5).

1.2.5 As an advocate of the inhabitants of the earth (1En 40:6) as any time he is sent on a commission by God, he stands in front of God, as Henoch does according to 2En 21:5. Later on it says that Enoch comes to stand on God's left, near Gabriel (24:1), which, of course, to indicates that Gabriel's usual place is also on God's left.[3]

1.2.6 Gabriel is characterised as "set over all exercise of strength" (1En 40:9) – probably a reference to his name which can be translated as "God's strong hero"[4] or "God has shown his strength"[5]. Probably the first translation is to be preferred.

1.2.7 According to 1En 71:8-9 he is God's companion at Enoch's nomination as "Son of Man" (1En 71:8-9).

All these facetes lead to a relatively unified picture: Gabriel belongs to the innermost circle of angels around God, the ones, who accompany him in his activities and who are commissioned by him to special services. They mainly play a role in the great events of primeval times, when Enoch lived and Gabriel was in charge of the paradise (1En 20:7), and in the end of times, in the battle of the "sons of light" against the "sons of darkness" (1QM 9:15-16).

From this picture, however, one cannot derive the angel's function as an announcer of Jesus' and the Baptist's birth. There are only few

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3   Bousset, Religion 328, suggests that he „sits" at God's left side.
4   Cf. Uhlig, Henochbuch 581 n. 6c. Comparable also Fitzmyer, Gospel 328: „God is my hero / warrior".
5   Cf. Brown, Birth 262: „God has shown himself strong."

comparable details in Luke 1 and Dan 8-9, the other texts mentioned above do not suit as parallels. So the fact that Luke 1 calls the angel's name Gabriel could be seen as pure coincidence – perhaps the main reason for this was the desire to name the heavenly figure proclaiming Johns and Jesus' birth. To this end the "Lord of the powers" (1En 40:9) of course suited excellently.

If we now look into both New Testament texts where Gabriel plays a role, a superficial comparison allows to state the following points: In both texts God's messenger transmits a message proclaiming the birth of a child – in the first case the birth of the Baptist (1:5-25), in the second case Jesus' birth. Both texts, however, show clear differences regarding both the angels' words and their framework. They thus have to be examined separately:

2. Gabriel in Luke's Childhood Story

2.1 The Announcement of the Baptist's Birth

This account says that Gabriel is sent to the priest Zechariah during he is sacrificing in the temple (Luke 1:10). The angel thus appears in a moment when the priest is completely dedicated to his service of God. This can be compared to Dan 9:21 where the appearance takes place at the time of the evening sacrifice.[6] One can assume that the tradition had a detailed knowledge of the book of Daniel.[7] The angel occupies a place on the right of the altar, a detail that can be compared to the Christian tradition according to which Jesus sits on God's right side.[8] The text wants to say: When Gabriel speaks to human beings, he is God's chief-executive. When he says that he stands or stood in front of God (Luke 1:19),[9] he relates to the moment when he was commissioned with the task he now is about to execute.

The message to the priest Zechariah proclaims the birth of a new Elijah[10] who will prepare God's coming to this earth (1:17). Although Old Testament and early Jewish parallels can also speak about the

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6   Bovon, Evangelium 54 n.50, considers also the time of morning sacrifice as possible.
7   For more possible parallels between Luke 1:5-25 and Dan 8-10 cf. Nolland, Luke I 29.
8   Mark 14:62 parr.; Acts 2:33; 5:21; Rom 8:34 et al.
9   Παρεστηκώς is a Perfect participle.
10   Luke 1:17 states, that he will behave „with the spirit and power of Elijah" and fulfill the prophesy of Mal 3:23 which tells that the coming Elijah „will turn the hearts of parents to their children and the hearts of children to their parents".

proclamation of a birth preparing God's coming, [11] the angel remains unnamed in these cases. The idea that this proclamation is made by the archangel Gabriel is thus unparalleled. Furthermore we usually do not find such a detailed description of the announced person's course of life. One might consider whether an earlier version of the story just mentioned an unnamed angel – but this remains speculation.

Undoubtedly Zechariah's demanding of a sign is also unparalleled in the Old Testament and in early Judaism. According to Isaiah 7:14 the proclamation of the child's birth itself is a sign which can be proven at the event. The demand of a sign usually belongs to call narratives like Exod 3-4 or Judg 6:14-24.[12] It remains unclear thus why Zechariah demands this sign, when he will be able to recognize within weeks whether his wife is pregnant. In the present context Zechariah's expectation can only mean that he demands a sign making clear that his child is in fact "God's precursor" (Luke 1:17). The actual wording of his request, however, unambiguously points to the possibility of the birth (see Luke 1:18).

Gabriel's answer, pointing to a miracle of punishment, which happens at once, is just as unusual as Zechariah's request. It has its parallel in Acts 5:1-10; 13:11[13] but contrary to Acts 13:11 it is not simultaneously a sign. The development of the story, however, will show that Zechariah's dumbness has its own function, which is not clear from the beginning. He must be unable to communicate verbally with Elisabeth, that she can mention the name, which Zechariah had received from the angel, independently. It is not said, but implicitly stated that Elisabeth is not able to read, while otherwise Zechariah could have communicated with her by writing, as he later, after the birth, does with the relatives (Luke 1:63).

All this suggests that the account originally functioned as a story from the disciples of the Baptist zu legitimate[14] their scholar,[15] but was

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11   The closest parallel is PsPhilo, LAB 42:1-3: a) statement of a childless marriage; b) appearance of an angel; c) proclamation of a birth; d) instruction regarding the name of the child. Within the Bible Matt 1:18-25 can be compared: appearance of an angel, birth and naming (cf. Wiefel, Evangelium 51). See also Judg 13, with the elements childless marriage, appearance of an angel and proclamation of birth. Cf. also Isa 7:14; Gen 18 and 1Sam 1. Form-critically we have an account of a miraculous birth of a man of God. Furthermore Judg 13 has two other, less important elements: the notice that neither wine nor alcohols is drunken (Judg 13:4,7,14), and the remark that the child will grow up with God's blessing (Judg 13:24, cf. Luke 1:80).

12   Cf. Radl, Evangelium 44.

13   The language of Acts 13:11 and Luke 1:20 are parallel: καὶ νῦν ἰδοῦ ... ἔση σιωπῶν τυφλός ... μή + part.

14   For more information see Klein, Legitimation 85-93.

altered in the course of transmission. One can only speculate about its original form.[16] However, what can be said, is:

The original version of the story probably contained the introduction, which states that both Elisabeth and Zechariah stem from priestly circles and thus attributes a Sadducaean ideal to them. This introduction also characterised them as "devout and righteous" according to Pharisaic claims. This version also contained the appearance of an angel. The fact that he occurs in the setting of a sacrifice can be seen in the light of Dan 8-9. The proclamation that the child to be born will obstain from wine and fermented drinks, which recalls the Simson story (Judg 13:14), also belonged to the original version. Judg 13 is also an important intertext for the description of the Baptist's later conduct. The original story probably also contained a note that the old couple had prayed for the birth of a child. V.13 seems to presuppose this, but this is described extensively in 1Sam 1. So the original narrative also has been shortened, perhaps by Luke himself.[17]

In the original passage following the angel's word Zechariah might have stayed dumb like Ezekiel did according to Ez 3:26 – which would not be intended as a punishment-miracle. Instead, the story wanted to assure that Zechariah could not communicate the proclamation of the name to Elisabeth. If Ezechiel 3:26 in fact formed the background of the original account, then it probably wanted to indicate a time of God's silence, which, however, only endures until the birth of the Baptist. In this case, the original story like Judg 13 also contained an appearance of Gabriel to Elisabeth – or Elisabeth chose the name John, "God is merciful", as a recognition that God had listened to her prayers.

However it may be: In an earlier version of the account, Gabriel played a role very different to the one which we know from the Jewish context of its time. The one who is usually described as saviour of his followers also punishing all evil (1En 9; 1QM 9:15-16), the "Lord of powers" (1En 40:9) and the interpreter of end time visions (Dan 8-9) is described here as God's special delegate who announces the birth of the herald of God's coming to earth, the eschatological prophet. Like the angel appearing in Judg 13, Gabriel is thus presented with characteristics of later Old Testament prophets. Using biblical language he predicts a coming event. He is no longer an *angelus interpres* like in Dan

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15   Regarding the disciples of the Baptist cf. Acts 19:1-7. For more information see Backhaus, Jüngerkreise.

16   Radl, Ursprung 86-139, tries to do this nevertheless.

17   A similar case can be found in Acts 10:4 where God's voice proclaims that Cornelius' prayers and alms, which are not mentioned before have ascended as a memorial before God.

8-9, his partner in dialogue no longer experiences heavenly events as heralds of earthly ones, but stays on earth, and the archangel brings him God's clear message without any heavenly vision.

Probably in the next layer, but still within the pre-Lukan tradition, the demand for a sign has been added. This motif usually belongs to stories about the call of a prophet, but is changed here to the announcement of the prophet's birth. Most likely, however, it was Luke himself who interpreted Zechariah's dumbness as a punishment-miracle and thereby created an analogy between the archangel and the apostles Peter (Acts 5:4-10) and Paul (Acts 13:9-11).[18] In this process the fact that angels stand in front of God, when they receive instructions, is applied to Gabriel, who thereby confirms his power.

With this the early Jewish apocalyptic traditions about Gabriel have been changed significantly. Now Gabriel is described as God's mighty messenger proclaiming the beginning of salvation in the birth of John the Baptist.

2.2. Gabriel's announcement of Jesus' birth (Luke 1:26-38)

Luke 1:26-38 goes even further in restraining apocalyptic elements. The birth of the Son of God descending from David to rule forever is announced. Contrary to Dan 9:21 Gabriel does not appear at the time of the evening sacrifice, and contrary to Luke 1:17 he does not announce a herald of God's eschatological coming. But like the angel that came to Simson's mother (Judg 13:3) he visits Mary. Like Gabriel's appearance as *angelus interpres* according to Dan 9 his appearance is not frightful.[19] He addresses Mary like a human messenger and does not vanish in fire as in Judg 13:20. Rather, he leaves the room and departs like a human being (Luke 1:38) after having fulfilled his task. Without being criticised Mary is allowed to ask a question if she understood him correctly. She

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18   The passage shows many „Lukanisms" which show how much Luke himself has shaped the story. For this see Klein, Lukasevangelium 85 n.23. There are, however, fewer Lukanisms in the angel's words which is an argument against the thesis of Busse, Evangelium 172, and Kampling, Herr 163, who suggest that V.13-17 were created by the evangelist himself. Luke treats logia in a very careful manner. Cf. Dibelius, Formgeschichte 31. It is not possible to establish longer Lukan additions with certainty. Radl, Ursprung 103, deletes V.18-20 and suggests that Zechariah's dumbness has to do with his meeting the angel.

19   This, however, happens again according to the tradition at the appearance of the angel before the shepherds at Jesus' birth (Luke 2:9).

obviously behaves correctly by allowing God to work upon her (Luke 1:38).

Gabriel's attributions again receive new accents in this account. The dialogue can be divided into three parts: a) V.28-29; b) V.30-33; c) V.34-38a, it is framed by an introduction V.26-27 and a conclusion V.38. The angel's longer speech (V.30-33) forms the centre of the scene. It consists of twice five sentences,[20] which create a unity. The sentences of the first part are shorter, in the second part they are longer and therefore more important.[21] The syntax is semiticizing: All sentences – with one exception in V.30, where a γάρ is found – are connected by καί. The ideas found here correspond to Old Testament-Jewish expectations[22] and develop Judg 13:3. The text announces the birth of the Meassiah who will reign forever as God's son on David's throne (1:32). Gabriel is seen as the messenger proclaiming the fulfillment of Messianic expectations. Luke 1:35-38, however, which is designed as an explanation of V.32-33, no longer deals with the birth of the Messiah but with the question how God's Son comes into existence by the work of the Spirit. This statement is rooted in Hellenistic Jewish Christianity,[23] but is probably pre-Lukan.[24] Gabriel is here not only seen as knowing the coming eschatological events, which are laid down in heaven already, he is also the one who knows about the heavenly events concerning the Spirit. It is known to him that God's spirit will come upon Mary like a shadow, like God coming in the clouds (Exod 40:43). Still more, he will penetrate her like oil penetrates the body. Through this the Son of God will come

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20 Cf. Jeremias, Sprache 48-49.

21 Hahn, Hoheitstitel 247, reduces this unit to 1:32-33, a passage, which, however, seems not conceivable without a narrative frame.

22 Originally we have an oracle of Semitic origin promising the birth of a son. For this cf. Gese, Natus ex virgine 113, who points to Judg 13 and Gen 17:18. The titles „Son of David" and „Son of God" are seen together as in 2Sam 7:12 and Isa 9:5-6. Cf. Ernst, Lukas 70. The angel's proclamation has linguistic parallels to Isa 7:14, as Brown, Birth 305 and Schneider, Lukas 48, have seen. As Son of David the proclaimed Son of God is heavenly king of Israel, but not yet Saviour as in 2:11.

23 Regarding the Hellenized idea of a birth by the Spirit cf. Norden, Geburt 81; Brunner-Traut, Geburtsgeschichte 105.

24 Spitta, Notizen 289, regarded this as a "Zusatz des Herausgebers des Evangeliums." Gewiess, Marienfrage 1:34-35, 251-254, argued that V.34 goes back to Luke himself. Zmijewski, Mutter 91, agrees with him. Lohfink, Himmelfahrt 154-57, and Weiser, Apostelgeschichte 51, regard Mary's question as a typical Lukanism. For Lukan origin see also Schneider, Luke 1,34-35 255-259. Dibelius, Jungfrauensohn 17-19, and Lattke, Lukas 1 68, regard the text as uniform, Lattke regards only V.34 as redactional. πῶς + future and ἐπεί, however, are not Lukan. Cf. Nolland, Luke I 52, who argues, that V.34-35 are pre-Lukan.

into existence, who will not need a father for his birth, but merely a mother. Moreover, it is significant that on this point in the tradition Mary is greeted with the Greek address χαῖρε and is called "blessed" χαριτομένη, a wordplay thus, which is possible in Greek only. Friendliness and mercy are expressed in this way. The angel's conduct is that of a gentleman.

The shift from escatological-earthly to heavenly-spiritual events is clear and shows that Gabriel again is understood in a new manner. Gabriel is no longer the "strong hero", who can proclaim and act out a punishment-miracle, he brings the message of a spiritual event which he is able to explain clearly and convincingly after Mary's misunderstanding.

Within this explanation Mary even receives a sign consisting in the reference to Elisabeth's pregnancy.[25] And so Mary's reaction is one of humility (Luke 1:38).

The account thus describes Gabriel as the herald of the coming Christ and the dawn of salvation. He does not interpret eschatological events any more, but brings the Gospel of the expected birth of God's son. Gabriel knows of God's mysteries, i.e., his plan of salvation, as the early Christian prophets do (Eph 3:4-5), and like the early Christian apostles and prophets do not only proclaim Christ and God's plan of salvation, but explain it, Gabriel, too, responds to Mary's question. With Gabriel's figure early Christian missionaries and prophets can identify.

As a kind of appendix it can be added that the third evangelist presumably interpreted the angel accompanied by heavenly hosts in the story of Jesus' birth (Luke 2:9) as Gabriel, too. Again, he proclaims the Christian message with its contemporary relevance and points to a sign which can help the addressed persons to believe.

3. Conclusion

In Luke 1 the angel Gabriel very clearly adopts the characteristics of Christian apostles and prophets who know of "God's mystery" (Eph 3:4-5), his plan of salvation. Accordingly he proclaims the birth of John the Baptist and Jesus, and describes both in a manner, as Christian tradition does: a) John as an ascete who does not drink wine and alcoholic drinks, who precedes the Lord, now Christ, and ends the fight between

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25 Possibly the note regarding Elisabeth (V.36-37) was created by Luke himself as already Harnack, Zu Lc 1 53-57, n.1 suggested. This, however, cannot be proven.

the generations as already Mal 3:23 had prophesied, and b) Jesus who as Son of God and Son of David reigns in eternity, and is born through the work of the Holy Spirit. Like a Man of God in the New Testament Gabriel can execute miracles of punishment where his mission by God is doubted. But he also can – like a wise man – explain his message to Mary who, afterwards, declares her willingness.

The change in the role of the angel becomes even clearer, if one considers the fact, that according to Luke human beings are not transported to heaven where they receive an interpretation of their visions by an angel. Moreover, angels come to earth to visit humans beings and reveal to them God's message. That's why the angels – among them Gabriel – are described in more human terms. Within Old Testament tradition Gabriel bears the characteristics of an epiphany angel who proclaims the birth of a saviour. Hellenistic Jewish Christianity takes over this idea, but completes it with a spiritual vision of God's Son and thus emphasizes – in its description of Gabriel – the spiritual dimension of God.

With the Hellenization of the tradition the story of the announcement of Jesus' birth (Luke 1:26-38) is filled with charm. This creates the description of the angel's different behaviour against a man and a woman. In the Mary scene no dissonance between the angel and the humble virgin can be found. In the contrast, the angel does not react sympathetically to Zechariah's question. One has the impression that he feels questioned by the priest, and therefore emphasises his authority and punishes Zechariah. However, the angel greets Mary courteously and responds to her question with an explanation. The angel is thus described like a human being who treats men and women differently. Perhaps this is an expression of a gender specific treatment of men and women in early Christian mission or prophetic teaching.

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Guardians of the Old at the Dawn of the New

The Role of Angels According to the Pauline Letters

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1. Preliminary Considerations

Ninety years ago Maurice Jones in his study on "St. Paul and the Angels" marvelled at how little significance Paul attributed to angels, especially as compared with some other books of the New Testament: "It may not be strictly true … that the Apostle makes the angel, as a type, antagonistic to God and man, but his general outlook in this connexion is such as to justify us in assuming a very substantial departure from the view held in common by our Lord and the primitive Christian Church."[2] Modern readers may not share Jones' apologetic concern to prove that Paul did not depart from Jesus' teaching with regard to the core of Christian faith, and most will feel uncomfortable with Jones' uncritical acceptance of the role of angels in the Synoptics and Acts as the direct reflection of their importance to "our Lord and the primitive Christian Church". The basic question that he poses, however, remains valid, as even a quick survey of Pauline references to angels will make one realize how limited is the role that angels play in the Epistles.

There have been various attempts to examine the question, yet only a few comprehensive studies. General works aimed at analysing Paul's angelology were written mostly at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century.[3] Typically, the departure point for most of them

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2   Jones, Paul 361.

3   The first systematic study of Paul's view on angels was a monograph published in 1888 by Otto Everling (Everling, Angelologie). He mainly turned to apocryphal and pseudepigraphal texts for parallels. In his rather nuanced analysis he reached the conclusion that Paul opposed a mediatory role of the angels in view of the one God and the one Lord and that for this reason the angels lost their meaning for the Christian: "Mitten in jener Zeit, in welcher die Engelvorstellungen eine solche ausgedehn-

seems to be the presupposition of a basic dualism in the angelic world. Yet while this might have been the assumption with which the authors began their work, their examination of the Pauline texts often leads them to the conclusion that such a simple distinction between good and evil angels is difficult to detect in Paul's letters.[4]

While until roughly the first half of the 20th century we come across a number of articles with grandiose titles referring to Paul's "doctrine" on angels,[5] or to "angelic hierarchies" according to Paul,[6] more recently claims to comprehensive accounts of Pauline angelology have rather been relegated to popular articles, and general overviews can now be found for the most part in the dictionaries.[7] Having realized that it is scarcely possible to construct a systematic account of Paul's "angelology" based on his erratic references, scholars prefer to focus rather on one aspect of the question or just one passage, instead of trying to encompass the entire realm of heavenly beings as depicted in the Pauline literature. The amount and variety of designations attributed to these entities is best illustrated by the fact that dictionary articles dealing with angels in the Pauline literature, next to ἄγγελοι typically refer to a

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te Verbreitung und Bedeutung hatten, weist er im Interesse des einen Gottes und einen Herrn jede religiös vermittelnde Stellung der mit dem Gesetz so eng verbundenen Engel zurück, sie sind für den Christen bedeutungslos und nur armselige und schwache Geister" (Everling, Angelologie 125). Dibelius, Geisterwelt, continued the work of Everling and complemented it by turning also to midrashic and Talmudic material as the potential background of Paul's angelology. His goal was also to make the link between Paul's angelology and his other religious and theological ideas (cf. Dibelius, Geisterwelt 4). Georg Kurze took up the topic again in 1915 in a dissertation defended in Breslau (cf. Kurze, Engelsglaube; this publication only contains the first part of the dissertation). Kurze offered a primarily contextual approach which tried to make sense of Paul's angelology from within the totality of Paul's theology. He distinguished more clearly than Everling or Dibelius between angels who are the friends and angels who are the enemies of human beings, and had no doubt that they are qualified morally (cf. Kurze, Engelsglaube 29). His final assessment of the place of angels in Paul's theology, however, did not differ fundamentally from that of Everling: "Im Mittelpunkt der Predigt Pauli steht Christus. Auf ihn strebt alles hin. Zu ihm hat der Apostel auch die Geister in Beziehung gesetzt" (Kurze, Engelsglaube 5).

4 Cf. Everling, Angelologie 118: "Dem Apostel des scharfen, principiellen ‚Entweder – oder!' zerfallen die Engel nicht in entweder böse oder gute, entweder sündige oder absolut sündlose Geister." He immediately hastens to add, however: "Selbstverständlich kommt es uns nicht in den Sinn, damit jeden Unterschied in der Geisterwelt nach seinem Bewußtsein zu leugnen".

5 E.g., Roets, Doctrina; Moran, Paul's Doctrine.

6 E.g., de los Ríos, Paulus.

7 Even when "angelology" and "demonology" still make their way into the title, as in Pierre Benoit's interesting essay, the subtitle immediately makes it clear that the object of the article is much more limited (cf. Benoit, Angélologie).

cluster of other terms.[8] Interestingly, it is those other heavenly entities, first and foremost ἀρχαί καὶ ἐξουσίαι, that appear to have gained more scholarly attention than ἄγγελοι.[9] This fascination with "powers and principalities" and other related terms is to a certain extent understandable given the originality of some of the designations.[10] Nonetheless lumping together all the supernatural beings is not necessarily warranted by the text. In fact in the undisputed Paulines the language of "powers" is fairly modest and limited. The only passage where ἄγγελοι are mentioned alongside ἀρχαί is Rom 8:38, and there is only one passage in the homologoumena, 1Cor 15:24, where we find ἀρχή, ἐξουσία and δύναμις together, the terms that are often associated with the characteristic Pauline "powers" vocabulary.[11] In 1Cor 15:24, this terminology, however, is much less prominent than in passages such as Col 1:16 or Eph 1:21 and especially 6:12. In addition, the supposedly typical combination ἀρχή and ἐξουσία, which appears only once in the homologoumena, occurs much more frequently in Colossians and Ephesians (three times in each of those letters), either in the singular as in 1Cor 15:24 or, more often, in the plural. ἄγγελοι on the other hand never occur in Ephesians and only once in Colossians, yet *not* in connection with other powers.

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8   The terms typically associated with ἄγγελος are the following (in alphabetical order): ἀρχάγγελος; ἀρχή; ἄρχων; δαιμόνιον; δύναμις; ἐξουσία; θρόνος; κοσμοκράτωρ τοῦ σκότους τούτου; κυριότης; σατανᾶς; στοιχεῖον. Cf. also βελιάρ; διάβολος; θεὸς τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου; ὁ πειράζων; ὁ πονήρος.

9   A glance at some titles of books and articles already illustrates this. For Pauline letters see, e.g., Caird, Principalities; MacGregor, Principalities; more recently Forbes, Principalities; for the NT in general: Schlier, Mächte; Wink, Naming. Notably, Carr mentions both "angels" and "principalities" in his title, but only discusses in some detail those "angel" passages in which he perceives a connection between angels and other powers (cf. Carr, Angels 66-72. 112-114).

10 In contrast to the designations for supernatural beings well known from contemporary and earlier Jewish literature, such as angels, demons, Satan etc., the background of the "powers and principalities" terminology is still debated. Benoit's article demonstrates well how limited the results are that a search for the origin of most of those designations in Jewish literature yields. Cf. his conclusion: "Il faut avouer que l'origine précise de la nomenclature paulinienne des Puissances célestes n'est pas encore pleinement éclaircie (Benoit, Angélologie 227)." For a more detailed consideration of the language of powers see Wink, Naming. More recently Forbes, Demonology, has persuasively argued that we should seek the roots of some of those terms in popular Greek philosophy rather than in Jewish apocalyptic writings.

11 It is thus astonishing that authors who explicitly distinguish between the undisputed and disputed Paulines, as does Forbes, can still argue that in this regard "the usage of terms and concepts … is reasonably consistent across both categories" (Forbes, Principalities 62, n. 6). Forbes does nevertheless need to admit that it is "richer and more developed in Ephesians and Colossians" (Forbes, Principalities 62, n. 6). Cf. also his comment on Rom 8:38: "this is the only passage in Paul that links the term 'angel' to his own *preferred* terminology." (Forbes, Principalities 68; our emphasis).

Concerning the last term often associated with angels and "powers", there is an ongoing debate as to whether στοιχεῖα belong to the same category or not, or even if they refer to spiritual beings at all.

The aforementioned tendency of the earlier studies to categorize Pauline angels as "good" or "evil" continues in more recent works. Since the majority of the references are not entirely positive, many, especially earlier studies, tended to characterize various Pauline powers as "evil", no doubt under the influence of certain passages in Colossians and Ephesians, especially Eph 6:12.[12] There have, admittedly, also been attempts to present the diverse powers as unequivocally positive, most famously by Wesley Carr,[13] but his monograph has come under substantial criticism and has not been met with much acceptance. On the whole it seems that the speculation as to the "morality" of various heavenly beings is more of a concern for later interpreters than for Paul himself, for his interest is usually limited to how they function. This is at least true for beings explicitly labelled as ἄγγελοι, to which the Apostle never applies an absolute "moral" qualification, although in passages like 2Cor 11:14 the contrast implies that ἄγγελος φωτός, as opposed to σατανᾶς, is to be taken as a positive designation.

These preliminary remarks have hopefully shown how our interpretation of Paul's angelic realm will ultimately depend on our individual interests and presuppositions. Which of the letters we deem to have been written by Paul, in particular whether we include Colossians and/or Ephesians in our investigation will influence to a considerable degree the results thereof. Our own preconceptions concerning the spiritual world, most importantly the extent to which we envisage it in dualistic terms, need not be underestimated, either. Finally, whether we limit ourselves to the beings explicitly referred to as ἄγγελοι, or if we include also other heavenly entities, will certainly affect our understanding. Since as we have indicated, angels in Pauline letters are quite distinct from other "powers", and it would in any case be impossible to consider all the "powers" in any detail in this paper, the rest of our contribution to this volume on angels will focus on the passages where ἄγγελοι, in the plural or singular, are explicitly mentioned. Since another traditional entity, Satan, occurs with a similar frequency in the Pauline letters as angels, and in two verses is even explicitly associated

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12 The following quotation from Broer, ἄγγελος 14, is typical: "Whereas the Evangelists clearly emphasize statements about the angels of God …, the Pauline corpus is nearly as clear in its emphasis on statements about the evil (fallen) angels and the demonic powers and authorities".

13 Carr, Angels. In order to present all the powers and principalities as unambiguously positive, Carr had to assume that Eph 6:12 was an interpolation.

with the latter, it could be argued that Satan should also be included in our discussion. To our mind, however, in most occurrences σατανᾶς appears to have quite a distinct task assigned, so we deem it justified to limit our analysis to angels alone, commenting on σατανᾶς only when the word appears in direct connection with ἄγγελος.

2. General Observations

In the Hebrew Bible one of the main functions of angels was that of mediators between humans and God. This is clearly presupposed in Paul's references to angels in Galatians. As our comments on specific passages will make clear, the place where an allusion to some biblical accounts is most plausible is Gal 4:14. On the whole, however, a comparison with the functions of angels in the Hebrew Bible shows[14] that there are not many explicit parallels between the role of angels in the Pauline letters and the Hebrew Bible. It would obviously be gratuitous to expect that we find in Paul's letters angels involved in all the activities known from the Hebrew Bible or from other Jewish literature for that matter, given that he is not writing a systematic account of angelology. It is nonetheless noteworthy that they do not appear in the places where we could expect them. For example the only "angel" that is mentioned in the context of the heavenly ascent in 2Cor 12, is the angel of Satan! No angels are ever seen by Paul in a vision, nor are they involved in the preparation of such a vision. The only possible reference to angels seen in a vision by (certain) believers could be Col 2:18. Remarkable is also the absence of angels in the account of Paul's conversion.[15]

In one aspect, however, Paul's attitude toward angels seems to resemble that of the Hebrew Bible, especially of the earlier, pre-exilic books: he is not interested in speculative angelology, but he does nevertheless seem to take the existence of angels for granted, limiting his interest, however, to the functional aspect. They are not named nor do we find any speculation regarding their nature. What is more, in gen-

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14 Cf. Mach, Entwicklungsstadien 61-63, who distinguishes around twenty functions of angels in the Hebrew Bible.

15 Even Luke does not mention any angels in this context. Incidentally, it might also be worth noting that Luke, who in the Acts of the Apostles does not refrain from referring to angels in various contexts (the term ἄγγελος occurs 21 times in Acts), seems reluctant to associate his favourite hero with angels: only toward the end of the narrative, in chapter 27, does he for the first and only time associate an angel with Paul.

eral there is no clear distinction into good and bad angels; their "character" depends on the task assigned to them.[16]

The surprise of interpreters that Paul assigns such a limited role to angels is often prompted by the fact that angels supposedly abounded in much of the Second Temple Jewish literature. Yet as Carol A. Newsom rightly notes, "the concentration of extensive angelological speculation in certain genres of literature (esp. apocalypses) and in the literature of certain communities (e.g., Qumran) reminds one that the religious and intellectual significance of angelology differed among various Jewish groups".[17] In spite of the absence of speculative angelology and lack of interest in angelic hierarchies in Paul, commentators have pointed to some possible parallels between specific Pauline passages and Second Temple literature.[18] There have also been attempts to search for parallels in the Qumran documents, and it is plausible that the one of the two main domains where angels are depicted in Qumran, namely worship, is also a domain that Paul apparently associated with angels, however paradoxical his reference may be.[19] All this might well imply certain shared beliefs, but this does not need to be overemphasized, especially since many of the alleged "parallels" are far from certain. In sum, since also in postexilic Judaism there is no unified angelology, we should not be surprised that the Pauline letters do not conform to any preconceived notion we might have on the "Jewish" view on angels.

Given that in the LXX the term ἄγγελος could designate both heavenly beings and human messengers, we cannot be sure that at all the Pauline occurrences the substantive is to be understood as a technical term. This is reflected in some of the translations, where ἄγγελος, usually rendered as "angel", in certain passages is translated as "messenger", or at least the latter term is mentioned as an alternative translation in a note. It is not always easy to ascertain which meaning is intended. While in some passages indeed a non-technical meaning might be implied, in no given passage is there a clear indication that the reference is to a human messenger. Humans are at most compared to but not identified with ἄγγελοι (cf. Gal 4:14), although it is imaginable for them to attain some of the angelic capacities, such as speaking in the tongue of angels (1Cor 13:1).

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16   Cf. Kuhn, Angelology 217, and the quotation from Barton that he gives.
17   Newsom, Angels 252.
18   See our discussion of individual passages in section 3 below.
19   Cf. our comments on 1Cor 11:10.

3. Ἄγγελοι in the Proto-Pauline Epistles

In the previous section we made some general observations on angels in the Pauline letters. In this section we propose to comment on specific passages where the term ἄγγελος occurs.

We begin with 1Thess 4:16, where we encounter the only occurrence of ἀρχάγγελος in the Pauline literature (and one of the only two in the entire New Testament; the other one is in Jude 9). In the description of the parousia, the Lord is portrayed as playing the central role, accompanied by traditional signs of the end times, such as the cry of command, shout and trumpet. These are all common elements of apocalyptic imagery, so this passage does not involve specific difficulties as far as the imagery is concerned, yet it is not entirely clear how to understand the three prepositional phrases. "Does God issue the directive and therefore Jesus acts at God's command accompanied by two other signs or does Jesus, marking the beginning of the parousia, give a loud command, which is put into effect by the angel and trumpet?"[20] The latter seems more plausible, so the two prepositional phrases, ἐν φωνῇ ἀρχαγγέλου καὶ ἐν σάλπιγγι θεοῦ, are most likely "used epexegetically to explain 'the cry of command' and the connective is translated as 'that is'".[21] That the angels' voice was powerful is not unexpected,[22] just as their involvement in apocalyptic events. ἀρχάγγελος does not appear in the Hebrew Bible, but is well known from Early Jewish, especially apocalyptic literature. Here the voice of the archangel serves most likely to announce the parousia, adding splendour to the coming of Jesus. His voice could also have the practical purpose to awaken the dead. That Paul's interest was not in the archangel as such but in how he served the image is attested by the fact that he is not even named[23] and does not receive any further characterization.

The second longest letter in the Pauline corpus is the letter with the greatest number of references to angels. ἄγγελοι are mentioned four times in 1Corinthians, always in the plural. Their role in all of those passages is surprisingly passive, even if we are not always sure what exactly this role consisted in.

In 1Cor 4:9 apostles are said to "have become a spectacle to the world, to angels and to mortals". It is reasonable to take ἄγγελοι and

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20   Richard, Thessalonians 229.
21   Richard, Thessalonians 229.
22   Is 6:4 mentions the "voice" of Seraphim; Dan 10:6 characterizes the voice of a man who is identified as angel as being "like the roar of a multitude." Cf. also Rev 1:10; 14:2; 19:6.
23   Cf. Bruce, Thessalonians 100.

ἀνθρῶποι as specifying what κόσμος means in this context.[24] Angels are thus, as created beings,[25] part of the world, and they do not necessarily need to understand the full implications of the Christ event. Thus they marvel at the sight of the apostles. The often negative connotation of κόσμος notwithstanding, it is noteworthy that in 2Cor 5:19 God is said to be reconciling the κόσμος to himself. Does that include angels?

In 1Cor 6:3 Paul, rebuking some members of the Corinthian community who were taking to court other believers, asks them whether they do not realize that Christians are destined to judge not merely everyday matters, but even angels. The majority of the commentators would like to see in this verse "a reference to the apocalyptic theme of the judgment of fallen angels".[26] This remains a possibility but cannot be established with any certainty. To our mind, what is essential in this statement, is that it demonstrates the newly acquired exalted status of humans (or at least the believers), exemplified among others in their authority to judge angels.[27]

In 1Cor 11:10 angels – or rather *the* angels – are again spectators, yet this is a verse that has provoked more discussion than all the other references to angels in this letter taken together. It belongs to a passage (11:2-16) where, as one of the authors notes, "each verse is beset with intriguing problems".[28] The text contains Paul's instructions concerning proper head covering during worship,[29] using arguments from the order of creation. In the verse under consideration the main problems pertain to two items: how to understand the first part, since it is not evident what ἐξουσία means in this context, and second, what exactly the phrase διὰ τοὺς ἀγγέλους refers to. As for the first difficulty, we agree with Joël Delobel that ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν ἐπί with genitive, in line with the use of the phrase in the New Testament, is best understood as 'have

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24 Cf. the comment of Collins, Corinthians 188: "Paul presents himself and Apollos as providing entertainment … for the entire cosmos, humans and angels alike". See also Fee, Epistle 175.

25 Cf. our comments on Rom 8:38-39 below.

26 Collins, Corinthians 232. Cf. his references to 2Pet 2:4 and Jude 6; as well as 1Enoch 10:11-14; 67-68; and possibly 91:15. Similar texts are mentioned in many of the earlier commentaries.

27 Sullivan, Wrestling 170, observes that "This would imply a superiority of humans over angels (cf. Heb 2:5), which in turn would certainly suggest a strong distinction between humans and angels".

28 Delobel, Interpretation 369. See Delobel, Interpretation n. 1 for a selection of some important publications on the passage.

29 Some exegetes interpret the passage as referring to hair dress rather than to head covering. As Delobel, Interpretation 370, notes, the argumentation offered to support this view by Murphy-O'Connor, Sex, is most elaborate, but Murphy-O'Connor was not the first one to propose such an interpretation.

authority / exercise control over something', so the problematic clause in 11:10 could be rendered as "woman should have control over her head". But why "because of the angels"? There have been various attempts to solve this *crux interpretum*,[30] most of them beginning with the assumption that the text must refer *either* to good *or* evil/fallen angels.[31] Those who argue for the latter refer to the tradition known from LXX Gen 6:2, where angels (the Hebrew text has here "sons of God"), attracted by the beauty of human women, are reported to have had sexual intercourse with them. This brief reference was substantially elaborated in some of the OT Pseudepigrapha, and as L.J. Lietaert Peerbolte contends, it is quite likely that the legend of the Watchers was known to Paul.[32] Such an understanding of 1Cor 11:10 is often rejected on the grounds that nothing in the context suggests a reference to Gen 6:2 or any later version of the legend.[33] Authors who oppose this interpretation usually observe that since the context is that of worship and Paul's arguments are based on the order of creation, it is most logical to assume that the angels referred to in this passage are guardians of the created order and/or, are assisting at gatherings of public worship.[34]

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30   Fitzmyer, Feature 195-198, helpfully summarizes the main interpretations. For some more recent bibliographical references see BeDuhn, Angels.

31   A notable exception is BeDuhn, Angels, but his own suggestion that Paul attributes gender division to angels rather than God is rather farfetched. He is correct, however, to stress the ambivalent nature of the angels in 11:10 and the opposition apparent in the Pauline letters between the old created order where angels played a prominent role (although he probably overemphasizes their significance in regarding them as the originators rather than its guardians) and the new creation in Christ.

32   Cf. Lietaert Peerbolte, Man 89. Lietaert Peerbolte briefly comments on how the legend was reworked in Jubilees, 1En, some Qumran texts, and finally the Testament of Reuben. According to Fitzmyer, Feature 196, Tertullian was the first to understand the reference to the angels in 1Cor 11:10 as indicating fallen angels.

33   Hooker, Authority 412, says that two main arguments against "evil" angels are that first, "nowhere else in the New Testament are angels thought of as evil; second … the idea is totally irrelevant to the context of the passage". Interestingly, the argument regarded by Fitzmyer, Feature 197, as the "most decisive" one, apparently contradicts Hooker's first argument. According to Fitzmyer, "*angeloi*, used with the article, never designates bad or fallen angels in the Pauline writings" (Fitzmyer, Feature). This might imply that when the term is anarthrous, evil angels *could* be meant.

34   Delobel, Interpretation 385-386, observes that even though "the reference to angels is doomed to remain cryptic to the modern reader, these two elements … may suffice to provide reasonable explanation of διὰ τοὺς ἀγγέλους: the behaviour of women in worship has to respect the order of creation symbolized by the angels who are indeed present in worship and watching the observance of this order." Fitzmyer, Feature 198, prefers to separate the two functions, focussing on the angels' presence in worship. Based on the Qumran evidence that he presents, he argues that "the unveiled head of a woman is like a bodily defect which should be excluded from such

One might wonder, however, whether these interpretations are really mutually exclusive, or if they have been regarded as such due to the scholars' assumption that angels necessarily had to fit neatly in one category, that is, they had to be be either good or evil. The article by Lietaert Peerbolte, even if not all of his arguments might be compelling, shows that it is possible to merge the major interpretations into a coherent whole.[35] Angels who attended worship could be essentially "good" angels, just as were at the outset the Watchers, yet there was a potential danger that the "fall" of the Watchers might reoccur.[36]

While the belief in the presence of angels during worship is in line with traditions attested in contemporary Jewish literature, one would expect Christian worship to be rather a harbinger of the new order, instead of a site of preservation of the old, and as a result, it could come as a surprise that they should act here as guardians of the old order of creation. It strikes the modern reader that in the passage under consideration their presence is used to endorse traditions which can be seen as oppressive to women. The emphasis on the differences between men and women in 1Cor 11:2-16 seems to stand in contrast to Gal 3:28. As a result, even an allegedly positive understanding of the function of angels in 1Cor 11:10 turns out to be problematic. Even if there is no danger of seducing the Corinthian women, the angels' role in 1Cor 11:10 remains rather ambiguous.

We encounter ἄγγελοι for the last time in 1Corinthians in the first verse of the hymn on love. In 1Cor 13:1 Paul asserts that even if he could speak ταῖς γλώσσαις τῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ τῶν ἀγγέλων, but he did not have love, he would become "a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal". This conditional statement does not tell us anything about the probability of the condition expressed in the protasis.[37] 1Cor 14:18 indicates that Paul could speak in tongues "more than all the other Corinthians", but it is not clear whether we can identify his speaking in tongues with the "tongues of angels". 13:1 as well as the verses that follow contain an implicit critique of those who excessively strive for spiritual gifts, neglecting the rightful attitude toward other brothers and sisters. The gift of tongues, just as all the other gifts, although good in itself, is rendered meaningless when devoid of love. The specific mention of the "tongues of angels", alongside those "of humans" could simply be a hyperbolic expression to signify the totality of the gift of tongues. However, it

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an assembly, 'because holy angels are present in their congregation'" (Fitzmyer, Feature 200). Cf. also Cadbury, Qumran.

35   Lietaert Peerbolte, Man.
36   Cf. Lietaert Peerbolte, Man 88.
37   On the third class conditionals see the comments on Gal 1:8 below.

could also offer evidence that angels were believed to speak a distinct language, which humans could possibly learn, or at least be capable of using in ecstatic experiences. Commentators usually point to T. Job 48-50, where Job's daughters are said to speak the angelic dialect. Raymond Collins, criticizing those who take ἀγγέλων as a hyperbolic expression, argues that "Paul's phrase appears to designate the phenomenon of speaking in tongues. Parallels in the *Testament of Job* confirm that this is the connotation of Paul's phrase".[38] It is an exaggeration to say that the parallel *confirms* this, but a similar phenomenon cannot be excluded. It should be noted, however, that the context in the Testament of Job is particularly positive. The passage depicts angelomorphic transformation which Job's daughters Hermera, Kasia, and Amaltheia's Horn experience, when they put on the strings that they had received as inheritance from their father. As a result they undergo an internal change of heart: no longer concerned about worldly matters, they are now focussed entirely on the worship of God.[39] If Paul indeed had in mind beliefs such as the one attested in the Testament of Job, then he used them in a rather polemical manner, for that which sufficed for the daughters of Job to have their hearts changed and attain an exalted status, is in 1Cor 13:1 disparaged as not capable of leading to what brings us closest to God, that is love. Possibly echoes of this view could be detected in Rom 8:38-39.

In 2Corinthians Paul refers to ἄγγελος twice, namely in 11:14 and in 12:7 where he uses ἄγγελος φωτός and ἄγγελος σατανᾶ respectively. In 11:12-15 Paul directs a polemical attack against his opponents. Three times Paul uses middle forms of the verb μετασχηματίζω in these verses with the reflexive meaning "disguise oneself". "False apostles" are accused of disguising themselves as apostles of Christ (11:13), Satan of disguising himself as "angel of light" (11:14) and the διάκονοι of Satan of disguising themselves as διάκονοι δικαιοσύνης (11:15). With these three Paul uses a concentric structure (a-b-a'). Both the first and the last pair characterize the opponents while the one in the middle refers to Satan. The middle statement (b) is at first only introduced as a comparison in the service of an *a minore ad maius* argument.[40] What is true of the lesser is illustrated as also true of the greater. In this way the claims are presented as more convincing. In the a' statement Paul goes a step further in his polemic invective and explicitly links the opponents to Satan (οἱ διάκονοι αὐτοῦ).

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38   Collins, Corinthians 475.
39   Cf. Sullivan, Sexuality 222.
40   See Furnish, Corinthians 510.

In 11:12-15 Paul uses the following antitheses: ψευδαπόστολοι and ἐργάται δόλιοι vs. ἀπόστολοι Χριστοῦ, ὁ σατανᾶς vs. ἄγγελος φωτός and οἱ διάκονοι αὐτοῦ [of Satan] vs. διάκονοι δικαιοσύνης. Here the positive pole of the antithesis is formed by Christ, φῶς and δικαιοσύνη, the negative pole by σατανᾶς and lie/deceit (ψευδ- and δόλιος). In 3:7-18 and 4:6 Paul had clearly linked Christ with δόξα, φῶς and δικαιοσύνη. In 2:11 he had accused Satan of taking advantage of people and cheating them. In 4:4 Paul had stated that "the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God". In 11:14 the opposition is not explicitly between light and darkness as in 4:4,6.[41] The focus is more on honesty and allegiance (to Christ or to Satan).

From the perspective of Paul's view on angels what he says in 11:12-15 raises two questions: first, what is the origin and meaning of ἄγγελος φωτός?[42] Second, where does Paul get the idea of Satan's deceptive masquerading as an angel? The expression ἄγγελος φωτός[43] is unique in our context, even though it is in line with light phenomena that are associated with angels (cf. Lk 2:9 and 24:9). In the Dead Sea Scrolls we meet "the Angel of Darkness"[44] and the expression "the brightness of angels" is found in the Life of Adam and Eve 9:1. For the second question scholars unfailingly refer to the Apoc. Mos. 17:1 where an addition to the biblical fall narrative reads: τότε ὁ σατανᾶς ἐγένετο ἐν εἴδει ἀγγέλου καὶ ὕμνει τὸν θεὸν καθάπερ οἱ ἄγγελοι. καὶ παρακύψασα ἐκ τοῦ τείχους ἴδον αὐτὸν ὅμοιον ἀγγέλου. The second apocryphal book that has a parallel is the L.A.E. 9:1 where a second attempt of Satan to seduce Eve is described: "*et transierunt dies XVIII. tunc iratus est Satanas et transfiguravit se in claritatem angelorum et abiit ad Tigrem flumen ad Evam*". While it is by no means certain that Paul knew of these or similar traditions, these parallels show that what Paul says here with regard to Satan and angels is not completely unprecedented.[45]

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41 See also 2Cor 6:14 ἢ τίς κοινωνία φωτὶ πρὸς σκότος; As the Pauline authenticity is disputed here, we shall not use this verse in our line of argument.

42 Cf. the remark of Everling, Angelologie 59: "Auch für die Angelologie ist die Aussage durch den Terminus ἄγγελος τοῦ φωτός von Bedeutung, der das Vorhandensein eines Unterschiedes in der Geisterwelt bestätigt."

43 For a detailed discussion of the different possible meanings of ἄγγελος φωτός see Harris, Epistle 774.

44 "… All the children of righteousness are ruled by the Prince of Light and walk in the ways of light, but all the children of injustice are ruled by the Angel of Darkness and walk in the ways of darkness. The Angel of Darkness leads all the children of righteousness astray" (1QS 3:18-25, translation G. Vermez).

45 Harris, Epistle 774, points out that in T. Job Satan disguises himself "as a beggar (6:4), as the king of the Persians (17:2), as a great whirlwind (20:5) and as a bread seller (23:1).

The only other place where ἄγγελος is used in 2Corinthians is 12:7: διὸ
ἵνα μὴ ὑπεραίρωμαι, ἐδόθη μοι σκόλοψ τῇ σαρκί, ἄγγελος σατανᾶ, ἵνα με
κολαφίζῃ, ἵνα μὴ ὑπεραίρωμαι. In 12:7 ἄγγελος σατανᾶ is an apposition to the
σκόλοψ which was given into Paul's flesh. Paul refers to the "thorn" as
ἄγγελος σατανᾶ. This is one of the reasons why ἄγγελος here is often seen
as having its general meaning "messenger"[46] instead of the more spe-
cific "angel".[47] In addition the question is also whether in the expres-
sion ἄγγελος σατανᾶ the emphasis is on ἄγγελος or on σατανᾶ, on those
who work in Satan's service or on Satan himself.[48] The understanding
of ἄγγελος σατανᾶ is closely related to the interpretation of σκόλοψ. In the
immense number of interpretations of the σκόλοψ[49] three main groups
can be distinguished. For those who consider the opponents to be the
"thorn" in Paul's flesh, ἄγγελος σατανᾶ refers to human beings who are
in the service of Satan. To support this view, some authors refer to 11:15
where Paul calls the opponents διάκονοι of Satan.[50] It is, however, rare in
the NT that ἄγγελος refers to a human being. For the second group which
sees in the σκόλοψ an illness of one kind or another, ἄγγελος σατανᾶ is seen
as a personification of the illness or as a cause metonymy, i.e. the cause,
the ἄγγελος σατανᾶ stands for the effect, the physical illness. The third
group interprets the σκόλοψ as some moral-spiritual temptation. Here the
ἄγγελος σατανᾶ is seen as the enemy of chastity, the adversary who pre-
vents the proclamation of the gospel or who causes unbelief or as the
one who causes Paul's outbursts of anger. It is not easy to take a deci-
sion between the second and the third position. In the NT Satan is both
presented as the tempter and as the one who causes illness.

On the basis of the information of the context in 2Cor 12:1-10 it is
very difficult to take any decisions concerning most of the disputed
areas in contemporary research which were surveyed above. No matter
what the correct answers might be, the most important aspect clearly is
that when Paul wants to be liberated from the "thorn", he does not turn

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46   In many English translations we find "messenger of Satan" (exception: e.g., New
     American Bible).

47   The expression ἄγγελος σατανᾶ as such is unique in the New Testament. If it refers to
     the angel of Satan the question is whether in the contemporary angelology Satan was
     understood to have angels. Most commentators point to Mt 25:41 and Rev 12:7.9 for
     an answer. Mt 25:41 speaks about the devil (ὁ διάβολος) and his angels. Rev 12:7
     speaks about the dragon and his angels as opposed to Michael and his angels. In 12:9
     the dragon is identified as διάβολος καὶ ὁ σατανᾶς.

48   For many interpreters it would have made little difference had Paul written σατανᾶς
     instead of ἄγγελος σατανᾶ.

49   For a recent overview see Thrall, Commentary 809-816.

50   Cf. also Joannes Chrysostomus, Hom. 2Cor. 26 (PG 61, 575-584, esp. 577-578) who
     understood the messenger of Satan to be specific opponents of Paul: Alexander
     (2Tim 4:14), Hymenaeus and Philetus (2Tim 2:17) and others who opposed the gospel.

to the ἄγγελος σατανᾶ nor to Satan himself, but to the Lord. The answer of the Lord ἀρκεῖ σοι ἡ χάρις μου (12:9) shows that Satan does not have the final word. What ultimately counts is the χάρις τοῦ κυρίου and the δύναμις τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

In Galatians the term ἄγγελος is used three times which, taking into account the length of the letter, is relatively frequent. Some scholars tend to explain this by referring to the hypothetical teaching of Paul's opponents in which supposedly angels played an important role.[51] Yet such a reasoning is prone to all the pitfalls of mirror reading, allowing little room for Paul's originality. In consequence, while it cannot be excluded that the angel verses in Galatians are indeed a direct polemic with some items of the opponents' preaching, it is more fruitful to consider them in so far as they can tell us something about Paul's own understanding of angels.

In Gal 1:8-9 Paul pronounces an anathema on anyone who would proclaim a gospel contrary to what he had proclaimed to the Galatians. In v.8 he states that even if he himself or an angel from heaven, ἄγγελος ἐξ οὐρανοῦ were to preach such a gospel, they should be anathema. This is expressed by means of a conditional statement, beginning with a protasis introduced by the conjunction ἐάν with the present subjunctive (εὐαγγελίζηται). Conditional clauses have been variously classified by grammarians, but according to the division one encounters in standard textbooks, ἐάν followed by the present subjunctive expresses the *modus eventualis*, often defined as a future condition of fact with an element of doubt. Such an understanding is reflected in some commentaries, and thus, for example, Richard Longenecker asserts that "the subjunctive mood is used because Paul is making a statement that is *somewhat* doubtful, though theoretically possible."[52] That the terminology involved in traditional definitions is often problematic is well attested by the following remark of Maximilian Zerwick. Observing that "eventual" is often understood as "probable", he notes that "the term «probable» is misleading as applied to this class of condition, as it may quite properly be used of an eventuality regarded as highly unlikely to arise".[53] Interestingly, in commenting on this category, he adds: "Irony

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51   See, e.g., Martyn, Galatians, whose comments on 1:8 and 3:19 make it clear that according to him both passages are a polemic against what the Galatians would have heard in the "Teachers'" sermons.

52   Longenecker, Galatians 16 (our emphasis). Earlier on in the same paragraph he makes it explicit that this assertion is due to his understanding of this class of conditionals: "The protasis of this verse is in the form of a third class 'future more probable' condition, where what is expressed is a matter of some doubt but with the possibility of realization".

53   Zerwick, Greek 109.

… allows the use of this form for an impossible condition, treated simply as an eventuality".[54]

In view of the foregoing, it seems that Paul's conditional statement in Gal 1:8 is full of irony. It certainly does not imply the *probability* of himself or an angel from heaven proclaiming a false gospel.[55] There is nothing in the verse that would indicate that ἄγγελος ἐξ οὐρανοῦ could be an evil angel. Yet since references to angels in Paul's letters are so ambiguous, in order to clarify the phrase further it will be useful to consider briefly what Paul has to say about heaven. οὐρανός, which in the undisputed Paulines occurs usually in the singular, has generally a positive connotation and is often associated with Christ and/or God. A notable exception is 1Cor 8:5 where both heaven and earth are referred to as the dwelling place of "so-called gods", as opposed to the one God, the Father and one Lord, Jesus Christ. If an "angel from heaven" were indeed to preach a false gospel, he would probably be like those false gods. This, however, does not seem to be the point that Paul is trying to make in Gal 1:8. For then, by implication, he would be saying something similar about himself. Notably, the same expression as in Gal 1:8, ἐξ οὐρανοῦ, is used in two passages in the Corinthian correspondence. In 1Cor 15:47 it is meant to contrast Jesus as ἄνθρωπος ἐξ οὐρανοῦ with Adam, ἄνθρωπος ἐκ γῆς χοϊκός, and in 2Cor 5:2 Paul designates the dwelling in which we long to be clothed as ἐξ οὐρανοῦ (cf. 1Thess 1:10; 4:16; see also 2Thess 1:7). Consequently, it is more likely that ἄγγελος ἐξ οὐρανοῦ is a thoroughly positive designation. An "angel from heaven" is presented, alongside Paul, as the one *least likely* to preach the gospel opposed to the one Paul had preached. Yet "least likely" does not mean "absolutely impossible". Even if angels dwell where God and Jesus Christ does, they are not God and do not possess the fullness of knowledge. In consequence, no matter how absurd such a possibility might appear[56] – and indeed, the verse is composed so as to highlight this absurdity – hypothetically even such a good angel, just as Paul himself, could go awry. It is significant that the same is not said about Jesus. It cannot be excluded that Gal 1:8 implies some distance between angels and Paul on the one hand, and Jesus Christ on the other, which would make it even less likely that an identification of Paul with Jesus Christ

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54   Zerwick, Greek. The example Zerwick gives is LXX Ps 49:12.

55   It is noteworthy that a first class conditional (εἰ + present indicative) is used in Gal 1:9, which suggests that a contrast was intended between the two verses.

56   Cf. Kurze, Engelsglaube 14: "Er will nicht etwa behaupten, daß tatsächlich einmal ein Engel ein mit dem christlichen nicht übereinstimmendes Evangelium bringen könnte, sonst müßte er ja ebenso mit ἡμεῖς die reale Möglichkeit statuieren, daß er selbst einmal unter die Irrlehrer gehen könnte, was offenbar absurd ist".

is meant in Gal 4:14.[57] Finally, Gal 1:8 by assuming hypothetically that an angel could preach the gospel, attests the belief in the possibility of a revelation mediated by an angel, although the negative context suggests that even if Paul shared this belief, he also saw the dangers implied in it.

None of the occurrences of the term ἄγγελος in the letter to the Galatians is without its problems, yet the one in Gal 3:19 is the most contentious one. V.19 introduces a passage in which Paul comments on the origin, purpose and function of the Mosaic Law[58] (3:19-25). While it is the verse that follows that has been most fiercely debated by exegetes, it is usually discussed in relation to v.19, which in itself presents an exegetical conundrum. Paul begins by asking: "Why then the Law?", and then goes on to explain that "it was added because of transgressions, τῶν παραβάσεων χάριν, until the seed would come to whom the promise had been made; and it was ordained through angels by a mediator, διαταγεὶς δι' ἀγγέλων ἐν χειρὶ μεσίτου". A glance at the variety of interpretations offered by different authors makes one realize that the understanding of this verse is largely influenced by how one conceives of Paul's attitude toward the Law. This is most evident in how the problematic phrase τῶν παραβάσεων χάριν is translated, and second, how the angels' relation to the giving of the Law is explained. It is agreed by nearly everyone that the verb προσετέθη, "it was added", has negative overtones,[59] indicating that the Law is secondary to the promise given to Abraham. Its temporary nature is further emphasized by what follows, where ἄχρις suggests that the "coming of the seed" constitutes the end, or at least the limitation of the Law's reign. Yet why was the law added? The majority of contemporary English translations follows those commentators who propose a causal understanding of the phrase τῶν παραβάσεων χάριν, rendering it as "because of transgressions". The problem is that the prepositional use of χάριν can either have causal or final meaning.[60] Concerning the phrase under consideration χάριν un-

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57 See below the comments on Gal 4:14.

58 Most of the commentators concur that νόμος refers to the Mosaic law here; Gaston, Angels, is one of the few to deny this.

59 Longenecker, Galatians 138, makes an apt comment: "It [προσετέθη] introduces an important temporal point: the Mosaic law was brought into effect by God subsequent to his covenant of promise. The fact that the augmented προστίθημι ("add" to something already present) appears in the text and not the simple verb τίθημι ("place", "set up") signals a nuance of disparagement and suggests that the law was not of the essence of God's redemptive activity with humankind".

60 It is used nine times in the NT, but Gal 3:19 is the only occurrence in the Pauline homologoumena. In most of the cases the context makes it evident that the use is causal, while twice it is clear that the meaning is final. In some passages χάριν could be interpreted either way.

derstood as expressing purpose could mean either "in order to produce transgressions",[61] or more positively, "in order to bring about the knowledge of transgressions" (cognitive function), or in the same line, "in order to define transgressions".[62] There is no consensus as to the meaning of this phrase in v.19, and the answer to the question "why then the Law" appears to be predetermined by how a given author understands the Law to function in Paul's thought.

We mentioned the difficulties with translating τῶν παραβάσεων χάριν for, as we shall see shortly, the exegetes' understanding of the role angels played in giving the Law is often closely linked to their interpretation of this phrase. The statement that the Law was "administered by the angels through a mediator",[63] an appendix to the main sentence, even though it might look like an afterthought, is hardly an insignificant addition. Before we come to the consequences of this statement for our understanding of the relation between angels and the law, we need to discuss briefly the possible traditions behind Paul's conviction that the law was ordained by angels. This is not as simple as some commentaries would like to see it.[64] Lloyd Gaston might be exaggerating when he wryly remarks: "the Jewish concept of the role of the angels at the giving of the law … was well known … [b]ecause all the commentaries say so, and they copy from one another the relevant proof texts".[65] It is, however, true that the majority of the alleged "parallels" could be disputed. That angels accompanied God at Mount Sinai, as attested already in LXX Deut 33:2, does not necessarily imply that they *administered* the law. Gnostic texts attributing the creating/giving of the law to angels are not compelling evidence. Finally, pointing to the later tradition that angels initially opposed giving the Law to humans is not convincing, either. Neither in Jub 1:29-2:1 nor in Philo *Somn*. 1:143 do we have to do with an account or even an allusion to angels ordaining the law. We must not, however, dismiss too easily Josephus *Ant*. 15:136 as

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61   See Martyn, Galatians 354. Rom 5:20 is usually mentioned as an argument for such an interpretation.

62   Dunn, Theology 139, goes even further here, for he takes the phrase to mean "'*in order to deal with* transgressions' – 'for the sake of transgressions' in the sense of providing a solution to the problem caused by the breach of the law on the part of those to whom and for whom the law had been given".

63   The last phrase, ἐν χειρὶ μεσίτου has caused relatively little discussion, for it is nearly universally understood to refer to Moses. For two alternative interpretations see, however, Vanhoye, Médiateur, and Gaston, Angels.

64   The opinion confidently expressed in some commentaries is reflected in the following statement in the EDNT: "The phrase regarding the mediation of the law through the angels … has, *of course*, parallels in Judaism" (Broer, ἄγγελος 14; our emphasis).

65   Gaston, Angels. His suggestion that Gal 3:19 refers to the law administered by the angels of the nations is not persuasive.

a possible witness to the tradition of angels' involvement in *mediating* the law. The passage does most likely refer to angels and not prophets as it is often claimed, even though Andrew Bandstra might be right that the context is not necessarily the angelic ordering of the law at Sinai.[66] There are also two other New Testament passages which are usually cited in this context, Acts 7:53 and Heb 2:2, and at least the first one does seem to attest a similar tradition to the one mentioned in Galatians. It is thus somewhat ironic that this supposedly well established Jewish "tradition" is best attested in Christian writings.

The fact that in Gal 3:19 angels are reported to have ordained the Law has been interpreted by some scholars as indicating that they are also its authors. J. Louis Martyn's claim that Paul turns the tradition that angels participated in the genesis of the law upside down, "speaking of the angels as the active party who themselves instituted the law, and saying that they did that in God's absence",[67] seems rather farfetched, but is consistent with his understanding of τῶν παραβάσεων χάριν. Martyn, however, does not go so far as to emphasize the supposedly evil/demonic character of angels in Gal 3:19, as some other authors tend to do.[68]

Scholars often observe that in the letter to the Galatians there appears to be an analogy drawn between "the epoch of the Torah … and the Gentiles' former status without Christ".[69] Having noticed this resemblance, a number of authors deemed it logical to pursue the analogy further and to identify στοιχεῖα of Gal 4:3,9 with ἄγγελοι of 3:19.[70] This approach, however, is ultimately unconvincing, just as are, often related to that, speculations as to the nature of angels in 3:19. The verse is designed to demonstrate the inferior and temporary character of the Law and to insert certain distance between the Law and God by the fact

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66   See Bandstra, Law. He discusses the arguments of those who oppose understanding ἄγγελοι as angels in this context.

67   Martyn, Galatians 357. Among authors who have written on the Pauline understanding of the Law, the angelic origin of the Law is argued for by Räisänen, Paul 130-131; supported by Stanton, Law 113. Räisänen's arguments are convincingly refuted by Thurén, Paul 82-83, who demonstrates how Paul used various rhetorical means to establish the distance between God and the law. Thurén concludes that "different figures – angels and probably also Moses – were involved in the process of communication, but to claim on the basis of v.19 that the use of a mediator indicates that God was not involved at all, is a *non sequitur*" (Thurén, Paul 83.).

68   Cf. n. 70.

69   Stuckenbruck, Angel 104.

70   Räisänen, Paul 131 n. 21, lists the main proponents of this view. Stuckenbruck, Angel 105 n. 144, distinguishes between those who equate both with demonic powers, or just see the alleged identification as based on Paul's intention to "underscore their negative significance". He includes some bibliographical references.

of angelic mediation. That anyone else other than God should be the author of the Law, however, is highly unlikely, and the passive προσ-ετέθη is best understood as a divine passive. In Romans Paul will repeatedly assert the divine origin of the Law. It could be theoretically argued that he changed his mind concerning that since he wrote Galatians. Yet it is more plausible to suppose that statements such as the one in Gal 3:19 were prone to misunderstanding, and as a consequence, in writing Romans Paul was careful not to utter similar statements. As for the "character" of angels in the scheme presented in Galatians, they are certainly not "bad", they merely execute the divine script, but their role is very limited. Once the administrators of order, it is not evident what their role in the new order could possibly be.

In Gal 4:13-14 Paul commends the Galatians who, when he first came to announce the gospel to them, in spite of his physical infirmity welcomed him "as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus", ὡς ἄγγελον θεοῦ, ὡς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν. This is by far the most positive reference to an angel in the Pauline corpus. Commentators discuss whether in this passage ἄγγελος could not be simply rendered as "messenger", yet most conclude that "angel" is the best translation.[71]

From the Hebrew Bible we know the figure of Angel/Messenger of YHWH, particularly difficult to interpret, since it is not always clear whether he is distinct from YHWH himself. The LXX usually translates the phrase as (ὁ) ἄγγελος κυρίου, yet since Paul typically reserves the title κύριος for Jesus Christ, this could explain his reluctance to refer to an "angel of the Lord". Consequently, it is possible that we have in Gal 4:14 an allusion to this mysterious figure from the Hebrew Bible. It might be added that in one of the most baffling accounts of an appearance of an Angel of YHWH in Judg 13:3-23, the heavenly figure is variously designated, and among others he is referred to as ἄγγελος θεοῦ (Judg 13:6). Interestingly, the expression ἄγγελος (τοῦ) θεοῦ[72] occurs less than ten times in the Septuagint.[73] In around half of those instances the expression is used in a comparison of a human being (more specifically, a king) to an "angel of God".[74]

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71 Cf. Longenecker, Galatians 192: "Paul … usually uses ἀπόστολος for messenger …, with ἄγγελος elsewhere in Galatians and Paul's other writings signifying an extraterrestrial, superhuman being". See also Betz, Galatians 226 (in n. 69 he names some other commentators who concur that "angel of God" is a more likely translation).

72 In the textual tradition of the LXX we encounter both ἄγγελος θεοῦ and ἄγγελος τοῦ θεοῦ, and it is sometimes difficult to know which one is the more original reading.

73 The expression ὁ ἄγγελος (τοῦ) θεοῦ is slightly more frequent and it usually occurs in contexts different from the ones where ἄγγελος (τοῦ) θεου is used.

74 See LXX 1Kgs 29:9, 2Kgs 14:17 (cf. also v.20) and LXX Esth 5:2. In Judg 13:6 the wife of Manoah describes the appearance of the "man of God" who came to her, compar-

Yet is Paul in Gal 4:14 merely saying to the Galatians: "You welcomed me the way you would have welcomed an angel of God, the way you would have welcomed Christ Jesus" (comparison)? Or does he finally mean: "You welcomed me as being an angel of God, as being Christ Jesus what I am in reality" (identity)?[75] The latter has been argued by Charles Gieschen who thinks that there is evidence indicating that Paul identified himself with an angel, and Gal 4:14 supposedly demonstrates that this was not just "any angel", but God's Angel. In addition, Gieschen claims that this verse should be understood in terms of angelomorphic christology, in that for Paul Jesus Christ *was* God's Angel. According to him, "instead of seeing the clauses in terms of distinct and increasing comparisons, this appositional structure understands the second ὡς clause as epexegetical".[76] Since Gieschen bases his interpretation on the way ὡς functions in this verse, a few comments about Paul's use of ὡς might be in order.

Analyzing the occurrences of ὡς in the letters of Paul we come to the conclusion that it frequently means "like", "as" or "as if". ὡς thus indicates either similarities ("like", "as"), identity ("as") or illusionary identity ("as if") between the realities that are compared. The question which of the three meanings is present in a particular occurrence can only be answered on the basis of the semantics of the sentence. The fact that one meaning can be clearly identified in one instance says nothing about another instance in the same book or even the same verse. In 2Cor 2:17 of the three uses of ὡς the first is comparative whereas the second and third are indicating identity. There are cases where the context clearly indicates one or another of the three meanings, but in other instances the choice is less clear.

In Gal 4:14 the choice might not be obvious, yet the fact that, as opposed to what Gieschen asserts, Paul nowhere else identifies himself with an angel, should caution us against an assumption that he could be implying this in the verse under consideration. Since comparison of

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ing it to (ὡς) the appearance of "an angel of God", ἀγγέλου θεοῦ. The irony is, of course, that at that point she still does not realize that the figure who appeared to her *was* an angel of the Lord (for he is only identified as such by Manoah v.21). In Gen 21:17 the voice calling Hagar from heaven to ensure her that God has not abandoned her is also referred to as that of "angel of God", yet it would be surprising if Paul were to refer to this passage in a paragraph preceding the one in which he discusses the allegory of Sarah and Hagar, presenting the latter in rather disparaging terms.

75   The paraphrase 'You welcomed me as if I was an angel of God, as if I was Christ Jesus which you know I am not' which expresses illusionary identity could possibly be implied in the Greek text, but not in the NRSV translation.

76   Gieschen, Christology 324.

special personalities such as kings with an angel of God is attested in the Hebrew Bible, it should not come as a surprise that such a comparison could be applied to the Apostle. We thus conclude that ὡς is used in this verse in a comparative way. As for the relationship between the two ὡς clauses, we agree with the majority of exegetes who interpret them "in terms of distinct and increasing comparisons".[77] Understanding the verse as evidence of angelomorphic christology is rather implausible, because, even if Gieschen was right, Gal 4:14 would still only be an indirect way of presenting Christ as an angel and the only possible reference to angelomorphic christology in Paul. Moreover taking into consideration our understanding of angels in the letters of Paul as belonging more or less to the old order, angels do not seem to be a very likely christological model for Paul.

The comparison in v.14, next to the aforementioned instances of comparisons between humans and "angel of God", could also, as Kevin Sullivan suggests, allude to the stories known from the Hebrew Bible where humans are reported to have received angels.[78] According to him an allusion to Gen 18 is most probable.[79]

Finally, it is noteworthy that Paul praises the Galatians for receiving him so hospitably, indeed "in a way befitting the reception of a divine guest",[80] *in spite of* his physical condition. Betz points to the parallel between "thorn in the flesh", σκόλοψ τῇ σαρκί in 2Cor 12:7 and the phrase "in the flesh", ἐν τῇ σαρκί in Gal 4:14.[81] According to him, σκόλοψ τῇ σαρκί is "a metaphor describing Paul's illness as caused by an evil demon residing in his body".[82] The expression Paul uses, however, is ἄγγελος σατανᾶ, not δαιμόνιον, and there is no indication that this "angel of Satan" is to be identified with an "evil demon". Yet it is noteworthy that if 2Cor 12:7 indeed refers to an illness, and in Galatians Paul has

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77   Gieschen, Christology 324.

78   Sullivan, Wrestling 124-125.

79   Cf. Sullivan, Wrestling 124: "It is relatively certain that Paul has in mind the Abraham cycle (Gen 16-21) in his arguments concerning those who are heirs to the promise, since Abraham appears by name seven times in Gal 3. However, the idea that Paul might have had in mind the Gen 18 visitation of angels (and God) to Abraham has not been explored". In the Genesis account Sarah and Abraham's guests are not explicitly identified as angels, yet they were interpreted as such in later tradition. Cf. also Heb 13:2, which possibly alludes to similar traditions of hospitality extended to angels. Attridge, Epistle 386, next to Gen 18:2-15, cites other examples of human encounters with angels from the Hebrew Bible as a possible background of Heb 13:2: Gen 19:1-14; Judg 6:11-18; 13:3-22; Tob 12:1-20. The echo of the same texts could perhaps be also heard in Gal 4:14.

80   Sullivan, Wrestling 124.

81   Betz, Galatians 225.

82   Betz, Galatians 225.

the same physical condition in mind as in 2Corinthians, there would be a remarkable irony involved: Galatians received as "angel of God" the one whom "angel of Satan" tormented. Hence, paradoxically, even if Gal 4:14 uses a traditional motif of a human being compared to an angel of God, and/or alludes to certain traditions of hospitality extended to angels, the image is subverted in that instead of a dazzling angelic appearance we are presented with the weak, suffering Apostle.

The term ἄγγελος appears once more in the undisputed Paulines, in the letter to the Romans, this time in the plural and with no article. In Rom 8:38 ἄγγελοι are named alongside ἀρχαί among a number of entities about which it is affirmed that none of them will be able to separate believers "from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord", ἀπὸ τῆς ἀγάπης τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν Χριστῷ ᾽Ιησοῦ τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν (v.39). There has been much debate about the nature of the specific entities listed in these verses. Some authors understand all of them as referring to specific "powers", and thus take these verses to be a more or less comprehensive inventory of Pauline "powers".[83] However, such a general "list" of spiritual powers which need to be neutralized/depotentiated[84] in order to ensure God's definitive reign is more likely intended in 1Cor 15:24, if it is to be seen anywhere in Pauline literature.[85] In Rom 8:38-39 the purpose is not so much to make a catalogue of specific powers, as to bring to the climax the point made already at the beginning of the pericope. In v.31, where the "concluding doxology to the central theological section of Romans begins to gain momentum",[86] Paul asks rhetorically: "If God is for us, who is against us?" The entire pericope Rom 8:31-39 is intended to demonstrate the greatness and invincibility of God's love,[87] from which absolutely *nothing* can separate the believers: neither various hardships provoked by humans (cf. v.35),[88] nor any of the elements comprising the universe. The pair that has provoked most speculations in these verses is height (ὕψωμα) and depth (βάθος), with some exegetes

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83 This seems to be implied in the discussion of heavenly powers in Dunn, Theology 104-110, although he suggests that "Paul himself did not have a very strong, or at least very clear, belief regarding these heavenly powers" (Dunn, Theology 108-109).

84 We agree with Wink, Naming 51-52, that the translation of καταργέω as "to destroy" is problematic.

85 See section 1 above.

86 Wink, Naming 48.

87 In v.35 Paul refers to "the love of Christ" and in v.39 to "the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord", thus the two seem to be synonymous.

88 Wink, Naming 48, rightly observes that v.35 lists "the sanctions of primarily human powers, a fact that is usually overlooked in this paragraph, where all the attention tends to gravitate toward the cosmic powers in vv.38-39".

finding here astrological references to the position of stars.[89] Yet astrological writings that contain these terms are later, and such an interpretation "overlooks the direct connection of the pair to create a unit of thought".[90] It is more logical to assume that οὔτε ὕψωμα οὔτε βάθος, together with οὔτε ἐνεστῶτα οὔτε μέλλοντα, "provide … an exhaustive sweep of all the spatio-temporal dimensions, after the fashion of Ps. 139:8-9, where spatial imagery is used to express the impossibility of escaping the presence of God".[91] Elaborate speculations concerning specific terms in this list are thus largely beside the point, and for our purpose it is only important to note that the existence of angels must have been deemed obvious enough by Paul to be named as one of the significant components of the created universe. That they form one pair with ἀρχαί does suggest that they belong to the same category, but does not mean that they are interchangeable, rather on the contrary. According to James Dunn, this couple is "unusual", for the "normal pairing is ἀρχή/ἐξουσία".[92] It might indeed surprise us that ἐξουσίαι are not mentioned in Rom 8:38-39, yet we need to remember that the only verse where this supposedly "normal" pairing occurs in the undisputed Paulines is 1Cor 15:24. Only in Colossians and Ephesians does this become a "standard" association. The fact that ἀρχαί and ἄγγελοι constitute one pair has led some scholars to speculate, based on the antithetical character of the three other pairs, that in this context ἄγγελοι are "good", whereas ἀρχαι represent evil spirits. They usually admit, however, that we cannot ascertain this for sure.[93] This is indeed rather speculative, especially since the nicely parallel structure of pairings is disrupted by the intrusion of δυνάμεις and the conclusion of the list with τις κτίσις ἑτέρα. This alone should caution us against defining too strictly the categories involved. If, however, we insist on opposing ἀρχαί to ἄγγελοι, the contrast involved by no means needs to refer to their alleged "morality".

The mention of "any other creature" incidentally implies the creaturely nature of all the preceding elements, including angels, and obviously this was in agreement with the creatureliness of angels in con-

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89   Schreiner, Romans 465, n. 20, mentions the commentators who support this view.

90   Carr, Angels 113.

91   Wink, Naming 50. Wink took the reference to Psalm 139 from Carr, Angels 113. In this context he as well as other commentators also refer to Eph 3:18.

92   Dunn, Romans 498.

93   Cf., e.g., Murray, Epistle 332-333; Moo, Epistle 545, observes that "it is natural to think that 'rulers' denotes evil spiritual powers, but the lexical evidence makes it impossible to be sure". Schreiner, Romans 465, thinks that "the powers described are likely evil, for good angels would not separate believers from their Lord", which shows that the author does not take into account the rhetorical context. One would need to ask whether "any other creature" also necessarily needs to be "evil".

temporary Jewish literature. Naming all the possible categories that comprise "every conceivable condition of humankind", establish spatio-temporal boundaries of the entire universe, and embrace the totality of creation, including the supernatural realm, allows Paul to show most emphatically the abundance, power and reliability of God's love, specifically manifested in the Christ event (cf. v.32).

4. Ἄγγελοι in the Pauline Antilegomena

Outside of the Pauline homologoumena ἄγγελοι are even less frequent. In Colossians there is only one, yet a particularly notorious occurrence of the term, in 2:18. The contentious issue refers to how to understand the phrase "worship of angels", θρησκεία τῶν ἀγγέλων. The literature devoted to the topic is extensive, but the passage is still disputed. Traditionally the verse has often been taken as evidence of the cultic veneration of angels, that is interpreting ἀγγέλων as objective genitive.[94] While the existence of angel cult among Jews in the 1st century CE, albeit difficult to ascertain, cannot be excluded, with regard to Col 2:18 another explanation has gained much popularity in the last few decades. Fred O. Francis has argued that it is more plausible to take ἀγγέλων in this verse as a subjective genitive.[95] The phrase would be then referring to the worship *performed* by angels, that is to angelic liturgy, similar to the one well attested in Qumran and elsewhere in Jewish literature. Francis' view has not been accepted by everyone,[96] however, even if "scholarship is moving in this direction".[97] In any case, whoever the author of the letter was, it is clear that he is dealing with a specific local problem, and the concern is here with a certain behaviour deemed undesirable rather than the character of angels as such.

    In 2Thessalonians we come across ἄγγελοι in the context that to some extent resembles the one in 1Thessalonians. Yet there are some signifi-

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94   Stuckenbruck, Angel 111, n. 161, lists the most important references. See also Stuckenbruck, Angel 113-115, for other interpretations that have been proposed by scholars.

95   See Francis, Humility. Cf. also Rowland, Visions, who concurs with Francis' understanding of the genitive but offers a more compelling interpretation of the rest of the verse. See Stuckenbruck, Angel 116, n. 177 for the list of authors who support the subjective genitive reading of Col 2:18. Stuckenbruck himself proposes to reconcile both interpretations, instead of posing a disjunction between subjective and objective genitives.

96   Cf. especially Arnold, Syncretism.

97   Sullivan, Sexuality 220, n. 28. Cf. also Stuckenbruck, Angel 116, n. 177 for the names of authors who support this interpretation.

cant differences,[98] not only in that in 2Thess not one archangel, but angels in the plural are mentioned. The image is also that of the end time coming of the Lord ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ. The term used to describe the event, however, is ἀποκάλυψις, not παρουσία, as in 1Thess 4:15 (cf. also 1Thess 2:19; 3:13; 5:23). As F.F. Bruce observes, from v.7 to 10 "the language is largely a cento of theophanic phrases from OT, what is said of 'the Lord' (Yahweh) in them being applied to 'the Lord Jesus' here".[99] Angels are thus depicted as Jesus' heavenly host, "in a flaming fire." The Lord is said to come to "inflict punishment" (v.8), an element that was absent from 1Thess 4:16. It is not evident how to understand αὐτοῦ in the phrase ἄγγελοι δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ. If it refers to ἄγγελοι, then the image is that of "angels of power", that is "mighty angels".[100] If, however, we associate it with δυνάμεως, then angels would be presented here as ministers of Jesus' power.

In the Pastoral Epistles ἄγγελοι, always in the plural, occur twice in 1Timothy, and there is a marked difference when compared with the homologoumena. In 1Tim 3:16 the phrase ὤφθη ἀγγέλοις is a part of a christological hymn. The reference to angels is anarthrous and most likely designates a generic category. Some authors have tried to link this phrase with resurrection, understanding ἄγγελοι as (human) messengers, yet this interpretation is rejected by most commentators.[101] Even taking the term to refer to heavenly beings we cannot be sure what precisely angels are said to have seen. If the reference is to incarnation, then it could suggest "the fuller knowledge of Christ's person which was opened out to the heavenly host by the incarnation".[102] Such an interpretation would imply that the angels' knowledge was incomplete prior to that event, yet their witness to incarnation would at the same time attribute to it additional splendour. This would be even more evident if subsequent exaltation rather than incarnation were meant, that is if the phrase stresses "the worship accorded by angelic powers to the ascending, glorified Christ".[103] The difficulties in deter-

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98 Gaventa, Thessalonians 105, fittingly characterizes the contrast between the two images of the parousia: "1 Thessalonians 4 promises that Jesus' return will bring comfort to believers, who will be united with him and with those believers who have died. Here [in 2Thessalonians 1] … Jesus comes as the awesome eschatological judge, the one who wreaks vengeance on the church's enemies by banishing them eternally and revealing his own glory".

99 Bruce, Thessalonians 151.

100 Frame, Commentary 232, gives a reference to 1En. 61.10 and T. Jud. 3.10.

101 See, e.g., Lock, Commentary 46; Kelly, Commentary 91.

102 Bernard, Epistles, as quoted in Kelly, Commentary 91.

103 Kelly, Commentary 91. Contra Kelly, however, nothing suggests that there is an allusion in this phrase to the "triumph over the world of spirits". Dibelius, Geisterwelt

mining the object of the angelic seeing are related to the fact that the arrangement of individual clauses spelling out the "mystery of our religion" in 1Tim 3:16 is not entirely clear. In particular, we do not know whether the order is meant to be chronological or if there is some other clue to the arrangement.

In another occurrence in the same letter "the elect angels", οἱ ἐκλεκτοὶ ἄγγελοι are listed together with God and Christ Jesus as witnesses to the author's warning to keep his instructions, as if serving to give more splendour to the authority of the first two. According to J.N.D. Kelly, the author "invokes God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels because the final judgment will be in their hands".[104] Commentators often point out that designating angels as "elect" is intended to contrast them with "fallen" angels, yet such a contrast is not necessarily implied here. If the main thought is indeed that (some) angels will share in judgment, this attributes to them a position conspicuously different from the one they are accorded in the undisputed Paulines (note especially 1Cor 6:3).

5. Concluding Remarks

The study of ἄγγελος in the letters of Paul proved to be a difficult undertaking. As we saw, the occurrences of ἄγγελος are comparatively infrequent and sporadic in the homologoumena. Each occurrence has manifold challenges for the interpreter. While Paul's implicit and explicit angelology betrays elements of continuity with biblical and apocryphal angelology, each occurrence is beset with problems that cannot easily be solved within the framework of what we know of Paul's inherited theological tradition. On the background of his faith in Christ, for Paul the angels lost much of the mythical splendour which they clearly had in some contemporary Jewish circles. There is nothing in Paul's letters that would lead us to believe that Paul had even the slightest doubt concerning the existence of angels. At the same time Paul does not refrain from a certain amount of irony in his presentation of angels which subverted some aspects of the established traditions. For Paul the Christ event is so central that everything else, including the angels lost their ultimate significance. In his letters the angels appear as guardians of the old at the dawn of the new.

180, also thinks that the reference is to exaltation, but he explains it in a different way: "bei seiner Menschwerdung war Christus den Engelmächten verborgen geblieben, nun wird er ihnen sichtbar als Herr der Herrlichkeit". If this were the case, one would wonder why angels are so often presented as spectators of human affairs.

104 Kelly, Commentary 127.

It would certainly not do justice to Paul to try to impose on his use of ἄγγελος the angelology of some apocryphal writings according to which in a mythical protological event the angels were divided into the angels of God and the angels of Satan and since then form opposing armies which are constantly involved in battle with each other. What we learn from his letters is rather that for Paul angels were part of creation and like all of creation were in need of final reconciliation.

In Paul's letters the dividing lines between good and evil angels are not as static and insurmountable as is frequently assumed. Rather in Paul's perspective angels are prone to temptation and susceptible to being used by Satan for his own purposes. This is evident from the fact that in Paul's letters angels that are unambiguously positive are explicitly characterized as such (cf. "angel of light", "angel from heaven", "angel of God"). Angels that are negative are equally marked explicitly (cf. "angel of Satan"). Angels that are not explicitly qualified can only be identified as good or evil in the context. In many cases it is difficult to resolve a certain ambiguity. Paul's implicit or explicit moral qualifications of the angels are not absolute or static. These designations do not refer to the unchanging ontological character of the angels, but rather point to the specific contextual function in which we meet them. Paul's understanding of the angels is far from underpinning an ontological dualism of good and evil. Rather, as with Satan, the angels whether they are qualified as evil or good are presented as beings that are ultimately in the service of God bringing God's designs to fulfilment. On this point, as several interpreters rightly point out, Paul's thinking is in line with the theology of the framing narrative of the book of Job (see 1:6-12; 2:1-7).

In the deutero-Pauline letters to the Colossians and to the Ephesians where the language of "powers and principalities" becomes particularly prominent, angels are decidedly marginalized, even more so than in the undisputed Paulines. However, in the Pastorals, although references to angels are not very frequent, when they occur, as in 1Timothy, there is no trace of disregard for angels, unless we take the possible hint at their incomplete knowledge in 3:16 as a sign of disregard. When they are mentioned, it is with utmost respect and in contexts that rather enhance their authority and position. Thus at least in this respect Paul's imitators differ from his model. It is rather the author of the letter to the Hebrews who spelled out what remained implicit in the Pauline homologoumena, namely that the Christ event placed the heavenly hierarchies in a new perspective, and the position of angels has to be radically re-evaluated when the superiority of Jesus, who took on flesh, suffered, and was subsequently exalted, is correctly

affirmed.[105] Thus incarnation has permitted human beings to aspire to a position far above that previously reserved for angels.[106]

Toward the end of his 1918 essay, Maurice Jones asserts: "The Christian believer had no further need of them [angels] as mediators to link him up with God, for God was no longer transcendent and inaccessible, but was brought very near in Christ Jesus."[107] A similar explanation of the subordinate role of angels in the Pauline letters was already expressed by Otto Everling.[108] In such an argumentation, however, lurks the view, common among scholars until fairly recently, according to which the increased importance attributed to angels in postexilic Jewish literature is due to the significant weakening of the original Jewish monotheism and, related to that, the fact that God in Judaism became allegedly so distant that believers could only have access to him through mediators, hence myriads of angels and other heavenly beings.[109] This opinion, with its strong anti-Jewish overtones, has rightly come under criticism in the last few decades.[110] Scholars who reject this view attempt to find an alternative way to account for the prominence accorded to angels in postexilic Judaism. They argue that the profusion of angelic beings of various ranks in much of the postexilic literature served to *enhance* rather than to limit the significance of the God of Israel, to demonstrate his power, which reached "to all areas of the world", so that "all operations of the world are under his control."[111] If they are right, then perhaps the diminished emphasis on angels in Paul could also be accounted for by the fact that for him all this was accomplished in Christ. So paradoxically, Christ's, and by implication, the believers' (or at least Paul's and possibly other apostles') weakness was sufficient to manifest God's power.[112] In Paul's scheme there was no need anymore for angelic hosts to display the divine might.

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105 Cf. the conclusion of the article by Georg Gäbel on angels in the Epistle to the Hebrews in this volume.

106 It is significant that the term used often in Jewish literature to designate angels, namely the "holy ones", is nearly exclusively reserved for Christians in the Pauline letters, with a possible exception in 1Thess 3:13 (cf. Bruce, Thessalonians 73).

107 Jones, Paul 424-425.

108 See n. 3.

109 According to Hurtado, God 24-25, this view, albeit widespread already in the 19th century, gained even more popularity due to the influential work of Bousset (Bousset, Religion).

110 See Hurtado, God 25-27, who refers to a number of authors whose works have shown that this common opinion has no foundation in the sources.

111 Hurtado, God 25.

112 See esp. 2Cor 4:7-11; cf. also our final comments on Gal 4:14.

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Rivals in Heaven:
Angels in the Epistle to the Hebrews

GEORG GÄBEL, ESSEN

1. Introduction

1.1 Why mention angels at all?

Given the frequency with which the author of Hebrews mentions angels in the first two chapters of the epistle, he seems to have remarkably little to say about them. Remarkably little, that is, of a positive nature; for the author's stance with regard to angels seems to be decidedly negative. Angels, we are told, are not divine sons of God; they do not share in God's creative activity, nor are they immutable and co-eternal with Him. Unlike the Son, they are not given a throne at God's right hand. Rather, they are servants of the Son and of those who "will inherit salvation" (1:4-14). They are mediators of an inferior revelation (2:1-4); the world to come is not subjected to them, but to the "son of man" (2:5-9), and Christ does not take them into his care (2:16).

Once this has been said, angels apparently cease to be of much interest to our author. Of the thirteen times that angels are mentioned in Heb, eleven occur in the first two chapters,[1] while in the remaining eleven chapters, there are only two more: In Heb 12:22, "myriads of angels" are briefly mentioned as part of a heavenly assembly, and in 13:2, hospitality is recommended on the ground that angels may pose as travellers in need of rest – a time-honoured motif,[2] but hardly connected to the concerns of the epistle as a whole, and clearly without any connection to the eleven occurrences of "angels" in Heb 1-2. So why does our author mention angels?

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1   1:4; 1:5; 1:6; 1:7 (bis); 1:13; 2:2; 2:5; 2:7; 2:9; 2:16.
2   Cf., e.g., Gen 18:1-16 (where the divine guests are not explicitly called angels); 19:1-23; also Attridge, Epistle 386 n. 34, on divine messengers as guests in Greco-Roman literature.

1.2 Some (attempts at) answers

It has sometimes been suggested that Heb 1-2 is directed against angel worship[3] or against angelomorphic christology.[4] Nowhere, however, does Heb mention angel worship, and while the importance of angelomorphic motives for early christology has rightly been emphasized in recent years,[5] such motives hardly occur in Heb.[6] This is why many exegetes hesitate to follow these hypotheses.[7] But not only are there no polemics against angel worship or angelomorphic christology. More importantly, there is nothing to indicate that, in the author's view, the christological beliefs of the addressees deserve correction. On the contrary: The author agrees with his adressees about their shared heritage, the christological ὁμολογία. Whenever Heb refers to the confession, he urges the addresses to hold fast to it. The aim of Heb is not to correct erroneous christological beliefs, but to make it clear to the addressees why their shared, traditional belief in the exalted Christ is still relevant.[8]

Loren Stuckenbruck's approach is slightly different. While he does not find polemics against angel-worship or angelomorphic christology in Heb itself, he reconstructs a *Vorlage* which, he suggests, was critical

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3   On the history of exegesis, see the overview in Stuckenbruck, Angel Veneration 124-127. Recent exegesis does not in general pursue this interpretation. – According to Gleason, Angels, Heb turns against an expectation of angelic support for Jewish-nationalistic hopes and causes.

4   Hannah, Michael 138, thinks that Heb engages in polemics against an angel Christology that was "in the air". According to Goulder, Hebrews, the addressees of the epistle are Ebionite Christians who believe Christ to have been temporarily possessed by an angelic power. Steyn, Myth 1125, thinks that "the danger of blurring the distinction between Christ and the angels was in the air".

5   On angelomorphic christology, cf. Stuckenbruck, Angel Veneration; Carrell, Jesus; Gieschen, Christology; Hannah, Michael; Fletcher-Louis, Luke-Acts; Fletcher-Luis, Revelation; Hoffmann, Destroyer; Steyn, Myth 1112-1117. For a critical stance towards some assessments of angelology and its possible role in early Christology, see Vollenweider, Monotheismus.

6   On one possible, but very limited and unpolemical, angelomorphic element in the Christology of Heb, cf. n. 48 below.

7   Cf., for many others, Käsemann, Gottesvolk 60, and more recently Mach, Entwicklungsstadien 287 with n. 22. – There is also a tendency among those who follow the angel worship- and / or angel Christology-hypothesis to concentrate on Heb 1:4-14 and to disregard Heb 2:1-4, 5-9, 16.

8   Notice the reference to "our confession" (ὁμολογία ἡμῶν) 3:1; cf. the confession to the Son of God 4:14; cf. also 10:23. That Heb accepts commonly received, traditional Christology in order to re-interpret it by means of cultic theology is a widely accepted and well founded conviction in Heb-exegesis; cf. Hegermann, Christologie 343-345; Walter, Christologie 154; Gäbel, Kulttheologie 240-241, 309-310, 475-477.

against a *Zeitgeist* friendly to angel-worship.[9] Whatever the merits of his reconstruction, however, it does not explain which function the passages about angels serve in their present context.

Finally, according to Ceslas Spicq, Heb demonstrates the inferiority of the angels to prove the inferiority of the revelation mediated by them.[10] True as this appears to be for Heb 2:1-4, it hardly helps to explain 1:4-14 and 2:5-9, 16. The motif of angels as mediators of revelation in Heb 2:1-4 will have to be accounted for, however. We shall come back to it later.

1.3 Angelic priests? A red herring

One more interpretation suggests itself. Heb 1:14 calls the angels λειτουργικὰ πνεύματα, which might be rendered as "liturgical spirits". The well-known focus of Heb on cultic matters seems to lend *prima vista* probability to the assumption that the angels are to be understood as priests[11] in the heavenly temple.[12]

Nowhere, however, does the argument in Heb 1:4-14 touch on cultic matters. In Heb 1:14 the word λειτουργικός has to be understood in the sense of "public official/minister", which is the usual meaning in most hellenistic sources.[13] Moreover, the middle section of Heb, which is concerned with priesthood and cult, never mentions angels. They appear in the context of the heavenly Jerusalem once (12:22), but nothing is said about a priestly role for them in the heavenly sanctuary. Similarly, Melchisedek is not described in Heb as a heavenly priest, nor even, in so many words, as an angelic figure. This is not to say that Heb or the addressees did not know such traditions.[14] All the more telling, however, is the silence which the epistle keeps about them. According to Heb, all priesthood in heaven is realised solely in the one heavenly high priest, Christ. He is not accompanied by angelic heavenly priests,

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9 Stuckenbruck, Angel Veneration 119-139 (reconstruction: 127-135).
10 Spicq, L'Épître, II 53.
11 So Karrer, Brief 146-147, who argues that the words λειτουργικός κτλ. are related to the cult wherever they occur in LXX.
12 On angels as heavenly priests in early Jewish and Rabbinic literature, see Gäbel, Kulttheologie 48-49, 62-69, 71-75, 106, 257.
13 Cf. Spicq, λειτουργέω κτλ. 378-384.
14 On Melchisedek traditions cf. Horton, Tradition; Karrer, Brief 263-271, and most recently Bensel, Melchisedek-Typologie (on gnostic texts: 133-222).

nor does Heb mention any other heavenly high priestly figure.[15] In view of the exclusively christological focus of Heb's cultic theology, angelic priestly mediators are superfluous.

1.4 "Ministering spirits"

So long as one assumes that the first two chapters of Heb are "designed to show that angels are inferior to the Son of God,"[16] it is not only difficult to explain why the author should have wished to demonstrate just that; it also remains unclear what, if anything, Heb 1-2 has to do with Heb 3-13. So, why does Heb talk about angels? In this essay, I will argue that the key to understanding "Angels in Hebrews" is precisely that the epistle has so little to say about them; that, for Heb, angels are not a subject in their own right. And yet, as we shall see, it is essential to understand what the author has to say about angels for understanding his argument in the first two chapters. In this sense, too, they are indeed "ministering spirits".

The Angels and "One who is Son" – Heb 1-2

2.1 The overall argument

Let us first follow the argument in Heb 1-2, so far as it includes references to angels. Heb 1 compares the angels to Christ. He is called "one who is Son"[17] (1:2), and the predicate "Son" is taken up again in the first juxtaposition of Christ and the angels in 1:4-5. The more excellent name which Christ inherited (V.4) is the name of "Son" (V.5), which expresses that his relationship with God is without analogy. This is what makes him superior to the angels and the object of their worship (V.5f).[18] Similarly, υἱός is used in πρὸς μὲν τοὺς ἀγγέλους – πρὸς δὲ τὸν

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15 Christ is called the high priest according to the order of Melchisedek (Heb 5:10; 6:20, cf. Ps 110/Ψ 109,4), but Melchisedek is not called a high priest in Heb (nor in Gen 14:18).

16 Goulder, Hebrews 393.

17 Without article: the focus is on being "son", on the quality of sonship. On the predicates "Son" and "Son of God" in Heb, cf. Loader, Sohn 251-253; Hegermann, Christologie 343.

18 "Deutlich behandelt der Verfasser des Hebräerbriefes das Problem [the relationship of Christ and the angels, GG.], indem er auf die Inthronisationsaussagen des Proömiums (1:1-4) eine lange Auseinandersetzung folgen lässt, die den einen 'Sohn Gottes' den בני אלהים gegenüberstellt": Mach, Entwicklungsstadien 287.

υἱόν (V.7f) to deepen the contrast between Christ and the angels. In 1:6, the predicate πρωτότοκος also serves to show the difference in quality that exists between Christ and the angels. At the same time, however, it prepares for a possible inclusiveness of the relationship between the "Son" and God, which could include other, later born offspring. This is all the more telling since V.5 had stressed the inadequacy of the predicate "Son" for the angels. This language prepares for the sonship of the many which will be the subject of 2:10.

While, in 1:1-13, the predicate υἱός stresses the exclusiveness of Christ's relationship with God over against the angels, it occurs again, now in the plural, in 2:10, where humans are called πολλοὶ υἱοί. Here, Christ is not called ὁ υἱός – in fact, the predicate "Son" is no longer used with reference to Christ in chapter 2. This is all the more striking given the marked use of υἱός as a specifically christological predicate in 1:2, 4f, in contrast to the angels. In 2:10, the meaning of the predicate "son" is widened to include humans in that kind of relationship with God which is typically Christ's, which, however, excludes angels. This is all the more remarkable since angels can be called בני אלהים, "sons of God", in Judaism.[19] When Heb calls Christ the "Son" in 1:2, 4-5 and then refuses to give this title to the angels, this is not only to contrast the one υἱός and the angelic בני אלהים. The πολλοὶ υἱοί (the humans belonging to the "Son") are included in the juxtaposition of the "Son" and the angels. Thus, angels and humans are set in contrast. It is the latter, not the former, whom Christ takes into his care (2:16).

To sum up: As the "Son", Christ is higher than the angels, but at the same time, as the "Son", he is also the "brother" (2:11) of the human πολλοὶ υἱοί (2:10), and therefore, he is the υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου, the ἄνθρωπος par excellence (2:6). The "Son" of God is the Lord of the angels and the brother of the human υἱοί. The contrast between Christ and the angels serves as backdrop for the description of both his relationships with God (1:5-13) and with humans (2:5-16).

2.2 Adam-Christology in Heb 1-2

What is the common background of christology, anthropology and statements about angels in Heb 1-2? Since 1:3, the argument unfolds in the medium of Adam-Christology, which is also known from other

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19 Cf. Braun, Hebräer 46; Mach, Entwicklungsstadien 75, and, once more, op. cit. 287. Op. cit. 73-81 examples for ἄγγελοι as translation of בני אל or בני אלהים or אלהים. Davidson, Angels 334-335, has only one occurrence (11Q13 II 14) for בני אל as designation of angels in the Dead Sea Scrolls.

early Christian sources.[20] Christ is called the ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης καὶ χαρακτὴρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ (of God). The background of these predicates is the creation of humans in the image, κατ' εἰκόνα, of God, in LXX Gen 1:26-27. Influences of middle platonic Adam- and εἰκών-speculations may have contributed to this Adam-Christology: According to Philo, the εἰκών of Gen 1:26-27 is an intelligible image of God, which, in turn, becomes the paradigm (παράδειγμα) of phenomenal, earthly man.[21] As the radiance of God's glory, Christ is the mediator of creation (δι' οὗ καὶ ἐποίησεν κτλ. Heb 1:2). He passes on the image of God to humans, and therefore, he is also the true man, the ἄνθρωπος and υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου (2:6).[22]

3. The rivalry motif and the interpretation of Psalm 8 – Heb 2:5-10

3.1 The rivalry motif and the interpretation of Psalm 8 in rabbinic literature

In this context, Heb makes use of the traditional motif of rivalry between angels and humans. While the rivalry motif can already be found in early Jewish texts, it is bound up with Ps 8, like in Heb 2,5-9, in rabbinic tradition[23], where, according to Schäfer, it can be ascribed first to Aqiba and his school.[24] In written form, it occurs for the first

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20 On Adam-Christology in Heb 1-2, see Käsemann, Gottesvolk 62-64; Bruce, Epistle 34-36; Hegermann, Brief 34-35; Weiss, Brief 145; Dunn, Christology 108-111.

21 Philo, all III 96. On heavenly, eternal man as εἰκών and λόγος of God and as archetype of earthly man in Philo, see Eltester, Eikon 39-41.

22 Similarly, the ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων of Phil 2:6-11 is a heavenly, divine being and, as such, the image of God and the paradigm of man. On Adam-Christology in Phil 2:6-11, see Peterson, Befreiung 121 n. 47; Cullmann, Christologie 178-186, esp. 180-183; Käsemann, Analyse 70-73; Hooker, Philippians; Betz, Adam 416, 36-41; Fossum, Name 292-296 (cf. 283-284); Dunn, Christology 113-121 (cf. 123-125); with reservations also Karrer, Jesus 315-316.

23 On the rivalry motif in early Jewish and rabbinic literature, see Bernstein, Angels; Gäbel, Kulttheologie 137-142; Kinzer, Things 41-66; Kister, Observations; Najman, Angels; Schäfer, Rivalität; Schultz, Opposition. For an interpretation of the rivalry motif in rabbinic literature see Goldberg, Heilige.

24 Cf. Schäfer, Rivalität 239-240. Aqiba and his school belong to the early 2nd Tannaite generation (A.D. 90-130), cf. Stemberger, Einleitung 76, 79.

time in the Tosefta (tSota 6:5).[25] These texts are of particular interest in the present context. They quote Ps 8, particularly Ps 8:5-6, in certain thematic contexts which always serve to express the rivalry motif. Among these contexts there is, with some frequency, that of the creation of man. I shall give only two examples in short paraphrase:

bSanh 38b[26]: God created angels to deliberate with them about the creation of man. They advised God not to create man, saying: "What is man...?!" (Ps 8:5). God destroyed these angels and asked others what they thought about creating man. When they gave the same answer, they were destroyed, too. This pattern repeated itself until the angels agreed to God's intention of creating man.

BerR 8:4-6[27]: God foresaw that evil would come from Adam. He decided, however, not to see the way of evil. The angels asked what the works of men would be. God told them about justice, but not about evil (8:4). Some angels were for, others against the creation of Adam. The former were for "love"; the latter for "truth". But God cast "truth" down to earth and created man – to the angels' surprise. A variant version: While the angels were still debating the advantages or otherwise of creating man, God quickly took his opportunity and created man (8:5). When the angels saw how much God cared for man, they asked: "What is man...?!" (Ps 8:5). God said: What have the other creatures (cf. Ps 8:8) been created for? Like man, for the pleasure of their creator. The angels praised God: "How majestic is thy name...!" (Ps 8:2.10) (8:6).

In these and similar traditions, angels quote Ps 8:5 to express their contempt for humans. In their view, Adam ought not to be created, Israel ought not to receive the Torah, the Shekhinah ought not to leave heaven for the Jerusalem temple, etc. And yet, invariably, God contradicts the angels, takes the side of Adam / Moses / Israel, and shows his preference for them.[28]

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25 In tSota 6:5 there is already a reference to Ps 8:5. Cf. Schäfer, Rivalität 236. Stemberger, Einleitung 157, dates the final redaction of the Tosefta in the 3rd/4th cent. A.D. It is not clear, however, when the rivalry motif was bound up with Ps 8:5 for the first time.

26 Cf. Rottzoll, Rabbinischer Kommentar 59-60; Strack / Billerbeck, Kommentar III 681; Schäfer, Rivalität 95-96.

27 Midrash Rabbah, ed. Freedman / Simon I 58-59; cf. Schäfer, Rivalität 90-91; further Speyer, Erzählungen 52-53 (on the rivalry motif in Koran 15:26, 28-33).

28 On the rivalry motif in later, esoteric Jewish texts, where it retains basically the same meaning, see Schäfer, Engel und Menschen.

3.2 The interpretation of Psalm 8 in Heb 2

Within Heb 2, verses 5 and 16 form an inclusion. Both verses refer to angels in a negative way. Angels will not rule the world to come (V.5), nor does Christ take them into his care (V.16). Heb does not tell us at first to whom the world to come will be subjected. He does, however, quote Ps 8:5-7 in Heb 2:6b-8a. The quotation describes the position of man / the Son of Man in comparison to the angels and stresses his greatness and glory: It is he who has been crowned king, whom God has given universal rule (V.7b.8a). While, according to the Hebrew text, God made man only a little lower than Elohim (ותחסרהו מעט מאלהים, Ps 8:6), the LXX, which Heb follows, renders מאלהים as παρ᾽ ἀγγέλους and מעט as βραχύ τι, thus determining the meaning of the ambivalent מאלהים and allowing for a temporal interpretation of the son of man's being "lower" than the angels.[29] In 2:9, Heb explicitly identifies Jesus and the "Son of Man". What the Psalm had to say about man is now interpreted as a sequence of events: Christ was exalted after he had been made lower than the angels for a short time. Though man's universal lordship is not yet visible, Heb has us look at Christ, who has already been crowned in heaven (τὸν [...] ἠλαττωμένον βλέπομεν [...] ἐστεφανωμένον). Thus Heb interprets the exaltation of Christ which followed his degradation below the angels as the realization of that human greatness and glory which the Psalm asserts. Heb uses the interpretive potential of Ps 8 for his own Adam-Christology: Christ is the true ἄνθρωπος who was exalted even above the angels, and in whose fate the fate of all humankind has been transformed. This interpretation of Ps 8 is reminiscent of the interpretations of Ps 8:5 in Judaism.[30]

3.3 The son, the angels, and the glory of Adam

Within the framework of his Adam-Christology, Heb argues that Christ has already received that royal power and glory which God has promised humans. The world to come is not subjected to angels (2:5), but to Christ, the Son of God (1:4f), who, as ἄνθρωπος and υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου (2:6c), is the representative of humankind.

While LXX Ps 8:6 describes humans as a little lower than angels, Heb argues that they shall be led to a position even above that of the

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29   Cf. Schröger, Verfasser 80, 82; Karrer, Brief 168; Leschert, Foundations 88-90.

30   Cf. Riggenbach, Brief 37-38 n. 1; Karrer, Brief 168, and particularly Kinzer, Things 40-208, whose interpretation of Heb 2:6-8 is in many ways similar to my own. – For a detailed exegesis of Heb 2:5-9, see Gäbel, Kulttheologie 144-151.

angels. Heb stresses the difference in quality between Christ and the angels and his exalted position above them in 1:4-14 to prepare for what he has to say in 2:5-10 about the exaltation of humans through Christ's suffering and exaltation. They shall share his power and glory – above the angels.

4. Satan as Jealous Angel and Lord of Death – Heb 2:14-15

4.1 The Problem

Heb 2:16 takes up the rivalry motif once more, thus closing the inclusion with V.5. Immediately before V.16, in 2:14f, Heb mentions Satan as the one who holds the power of death, but who was overcome by the death of Christ.

The close connection with V.16 and the wider context of Heb 1-2 suggest that V.14-15, too, has to be understood within the framework of the argument concerning angels. Loader concludes that Heb interprets the atoning death of Jesus on the cross as the victory over death, as the defeat of demonic / angelic powers opposed to God.[31] However, Loader himself immediately raises the objection that angels do not appear as powers opposed to God in Heb 1-2.[32] Nor, we need to add, does Heb 2:14-15 interpret the death of Jesus as effecting atonement. Thus, this interpretation is not very convincing. Yet Loader is surely right in searching for the connection between V.14-15 and the argument concerning angels, who are explicitly mentioned again in the immediately following verse.

Here, too, the epistle's argument is still related to Adam-Christology and to the motif of rivalry between humans and angels. Again, we need to look at the religio-historical background. Heb takes up a tradition concerning Satan, who is here regarded as an angel and who tempts humans to commit sin and to renounce God. With this in mind, the argument of V.14-15 fits into the context of Heb 1-2 as well as into the wider context.

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31   Loader, Sohn 112-113.
32   Op. cit. 114.

4.2 The religio-historical background

In 2Enoch, Adam is described as a "second angel", who ruled the earth and God's other creatures in royal splendour (2Enoch 30:11-12). Out of envy, the angel Satanail seduced Eve and, through her, Adam to commit sin, whereupon Adam lost his angelic status. Of particular interest is the reason for Satanail's envy: "And the devil understood how I [God] wished to create another world, so that everything could be subjected to Adam on earth, to rule and reign over it" (2Enoch 31:3, cf. V.1-6).[33] This is reminiscent of Heb 2:5: οὐ γὰρ ἀγγέλοις ὑπέταξεν τὴν οἰκουμένην τὴν μέλλουσαν.[34]

In the *Life of Adam and Eve*, the angel Satan describes the creation of Adam, which caused him to lose his own close relationship with God (VitAd 10-16, 47). God preferred man to the angel. On God's command, Michael worshipped Adam, the image of God; on Michael's command, all other angels did the same. Satan alone refused to worship Adam. He wanted to become equal to God. When Satan refused to worship Adam, he fell down to earth and lost his glory. As in 2Enoch, he envied humans their glory and seduced Eve, and Adam through her, to commit sin, so that humans, too, might lose their glory.[35]

To sum up: Satan, regarded as an angel, envied humans their glory and closeness to God and therefore seduced them to commit sin, which leads to death. Adam gave in to temptation and therefore lost his status above the angels, which had caused Satan's envy. These traditional motives are presupposed in Heb 2:14-15.

4.3 The argument in Heb 2:14-15

Heb takes up the juxtaposition of the "Son" and the angels from 1:4-5, from which unfolds the description of Christ's relationship with the "sons", "brothers" and "children" whom God gave him (2:10-13). Christ's degradation below the angels is an act of solidarity with his "children", whose life – in contrast to that of heavenly beings – is determined by their existence in blood and flesh (2:14). Thus, the argu-

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33 Translation by Anderson, 2 (Slavonic Apocalypse of) Enoch 154.

34 While there is an ongoing debate about the date of composition of 2Enoch, following Böttrich, Weltweisheit 118-125, I consider it likely that 2Enoch dates from the 1st cent. A.D., and indeed from before 70 A.D.

35 These motives appear frequently in early Jewish (and Christian) literature. Cf., e.g., ApkMos 17-19, 39; III (Greek) Bar 4:8; SapSal 2:23-24. Further see Gäbel, Kulttheologie 137-142. For Rabbinic parallels, see Schäfer, Rivalität 93-94.

ment in 2:14-15 is still part of the exploration of the positions of Christ, humans, and angels relative to each other, and consequently, the rivalry motif is explicitly taken up again in V.16.

Naming σὰρξ καὶ αἷμα, θάνατος and φόβος, Heb 2:14 gives a threefold description of the human condition. The end of life in the σάρξ is death, which causes fear. Human life, overshadowed by this fear, becomes slavery (V.15). The wider context shows that Heb is interested in temptation and in overcoming temptation. Mortality and fear, part of the human condition, are the causes of the πειρασμός, which becomes the entrance for sin when humans give in to temptation (4:15). Thus, summing up Christ's life under the human condition, Heb 2:18 says about him: ἐν ᾧ γὰρ πέπονθεν αὐτὸς πειρασθείς. Similarly, in 4:15 Heb calls Christ the πεπειρασμένον δὲ κατὰ πάντα καθ' ὁμοιότητα. The one who has power over death (2:14) enslaves humans (V.15), tempting them to sin through fear of death. Christ took upon himself this human condition.

Suffering death, yet remaining faithful to God, Christ withstood the temptation to be disobedient to which Adam had yielded. His death has broken the power of the διάβολος and set humans free from slavery.

4.4 Christ, the angels, and temptation

In 2:14-15, Heb makes use of the traditional motif of the envy of the angels and of the temptation of Adam. Christ, the "Son", in contrast to the angels, has taken flesh and blood to become like one of the "sons/children".[36] In contrast to the first Adam, he has withstood Satan in the situation of πειρασμός, maintaining obedience to God until death. Satan, traditionally seen as an angel, had subjected humans through his power over death. Now, he was himself overcome through that death by which "man" once again gained his position superior to the angels, which they had envied him. Through his obedience, the "Son" has proved to be the new Adam and the true man whose glory is greater than that of the angels.[37]

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36 Thus, among others, Hofius, Vorhang 78; Laub, Bekenntnis 86.
37 For a detailed exegesis of Heb 2:14-16, see Gäbel, Kulttheologie 158-161.

5. Christ, the angels, and Israel – Heb 2:16; 3:1-6; 2:1-4

5.1 Israel, not the angels

In 2:16, Heb takes up the rivalry motif one last time, giving it a decisive new turn. Whereas the argument so far has juxtaposed angels and humans, emphasising God's preference for the latter, now it is the descendants of Abraham – Israel – whom Christ takes into his care, so that it is Israel rather than the angels who receive God's favour. This statement is rooted in the rivalry motif, which, as we have already seen, shows how God prefers (among others) Moses / Israel to the angels (cf. 3.1). It is with this aspect of the rivalry motif that we are now concerned.

Heb 2:1-4 mentions angels in their function as mediators of revelation. According to Gal 3:19, the Torah was given "through angels by a mediator", Moses. Heb 2:1-4 and 3:1-6 compare Christ to these mediators, to the angels and Moses, respectively. Both passages are connected to the overall argument concerning Christ and the angels in various ways, which we shall explore. However, in 2:1-4; 3:1-6, these connections remain in the background, whereas the main aim here is to highlight God's favour for Israel – which, of course, is precisely what the rivalry motif as stated in 2:16 is about.

5.2 Moses and angels at Sinai according to Jewish tradition

To explore the connections between Heb 2:1-4, 3:1-6, and the argument of Heb concerning Christ and the angels, we will first look at Rabbinic traditions in which the rivalry motif and the quotation of Ps 8 are bound up with Moses' ascent to mount Sinai and the revelation of the Torah.[38]

bShab 88b: When Moses ascended mount Sinai, the angels asked God why Moses, born of a woman, should come into their midst. When they learned that he was coming to receive the Torah, they said: "What is man...?!" (Ps 8:5). They demanded that the Torah be kept in heaven. Moses convinced them that the Torah was not for them, but for Israel. Now they quoted Ps 8:2: "O Lord, how majestic is thy name!".[39]

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38   Cf. Schultz, Opposition; Najman, Angels; Schäfer, Rivalität 121-131.
39   Cf. Strack / Billerbeck, Kommentar I 597-598; Schäfer, Rivalität 127, 395. The same tradition may be found in ARN 2 (Abot de Rabbi Nathan, ed. Goldin, 20-21).

PesR 96b: Moses ascended mount Sinai and went further up into heaven. The angels tried to stop him, but God intervened, saying: "When I created man, you said 'What is man...' etc. (Ps 8:5); and now you do not want me to give Israel the Torah...".[40]

MidrTeh 8: When Moses ascended mount Sinai, his face became radiant. This radiance was the "glory and honour" to which Ps 8:6 ("you ... crowned him [man] ...") refers.

According to these traditions, the angels envy Israel the revelation and wish to withhold the Torah from them. Moses, the representative of Israel, overcomes their resistance. Some traditions combine ascent on Sinai and heavenly ascent, and the radiance of Moses' face on Sinai can be interpreted as the glory given to man by God.

As mentioned above, the combination of the rivalry motif with Ps 8 is not found prior to Rabbinic texts, but the motif itself is older. This is true also for the motif of angelic opposition to Moses' ascent on Sinai and further into heaven.[41] As we shall see, there are remarkable similarities between the Rabbinic texts cited above, early Christian texts such as Heb and 2Cor, and the Samaritan book Memar Marqah concerning Moses' ascent and the radiance on his face as the glory of Adam / primeval man renewed (cf. 5.3). We can be certain, therefore, that we are dealing with a motif which has been received into early Christian, Rabbinic, and Samaritan tradition, but which goes back to early Jewish times.

5.3 Moses, Christ, and the glory of Adam – Heb 3:1-6

We now turn to Heb 3:1-6. Heb does not explicitly take up the motif of angelic opposition here which, in Jewish tradition, is connected with Moses' ascent to Sinai and his glorification. In fact, he does not even mention angels here. Yet, the following exegesis will show how this passage serves to incorporate the motif of God's favour for Israel, stated in 2:16, into the Adam-Christology of Heb 1-2.

As we have seen, Heb 2:5-9 interprets Christ's exaltation and glorification as the fulfillment of man's destiny according to Ps 8:5-6. In some Rabbinic traditions, however, it is the radiance on the face of Moses which fulfils this announcement of the Psalm (cf. 5.2). Heb ascribes to Christ what is elsewhere ascribed to Moses. In fact, Heb proceeds to insist that Christ's glory surpasses that of Moses (3:3). As we

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40 Cf. Schäfer, Rivalität 129-131, 131-133.
41 For early Jewish (and other) material, see Najman, Angels; Schultz, Opposition.

shall now see, the comparison of Christ and Moses in Heb 3:1-6 pre-
supposes a traditional, early Jewish and Samaritan Adam-Moses-
typology, which is found, e.g., in Memar Marqah and which was trans-
formed into a Moses-Christ-typology. The latter, however, still presup-
poses the comparison with Adam.

Memar Marqah[42] describes Moses as new Adam.[43] When Moses as-
cended mount Sinai to receive the Torah, he was given the "form"
(צלמה) which Adam had lost. In other words, he was given the glory of
Adam which was identified with his quality of being created in the
image of God (cf. צלם Gen 1:26). The radiance which Moses received
remained with him until his death, whereas Adam lost his glory after
the fall. Moses, then, has brought back the glory of Adam. Thus, Me-
mar Marqah calls Moses the one who opened the garden Eden of the
Torah (אשר פתח לנו גן עדן התורה).[44] In other words, he has reversed the
expulsion from paradise after the fall.[45]

In early Christianity, this Adam-Moses-typology was transformed
into a Moses-Christ-typology. Paul already must have known a similar
comparison between Moses and Adam. He writes in 2Cor 3:7, 12-13
that the radiance on the face of Christ surpasses the radiance on the
face of Moses, which was gradually lost.[46] In 2Cor 4:4, taking up Adam-
typology, he calls Christ the εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ: Not Moses, the recipient of
revelation on Sinai, brings back the glory of Adam, but Christ, the im-
age of God and archetype of man.[47] Moses is given the inferior position
which was Adam's in tradition, whereas Christ assumes what used to
be the traditional position of Moses, who was regarded as a new Adam
and mediator of revelation.

Similarly to Paul in 2Cor, Heb 3:1-6 juxtaposes Christ and Moses,
and in Heb 3:3, as in 2Cor 3:6-9, Christ's greater δόξα is the evidence for
his superiority.[48] As mentioned above, the reference of δόξα to the glory
of Adam in Heb 3:3 presupposes Heb 1:3, where, in an allusion to

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42 A Samaritan writing which originated between the 2nd and 4th centuries A.D.; cf.
    Macdonald, Memar Marqah, I, V-VI, XX.

43 Book 5, § 4. Macdonald, Memar Marqah I, 128; II, 208f; cf. Kinzer, Things 184-185.

44 Memar Marqah, §2, op. cit. I, 32; II, 47.

45 Kahle (in Macdonald [ed.], op. cit. I, Vf) regards the statements about Moses in
    Memar Marqah as adaptations of christological motives; cf. Macdonald, op. cit. I,
    XVII; XVIIIf; XIX. On the Samaritan view of Moses cf. Macdonald, Doctrine.

46 Cf. Kinzer, Things 240-244.

47 Cf. Berger, Theologiegeschichte 302 (§ 166).

48 As the glorification of Moses during his ascent to Sinai / heaven may imply an an-
    gelomorphic aspect, the comparison of Moses' and Christ's δόξα could be, in a lim-
    ited sense, an angelomorphic element in the christology of Heb, though one that has
    been filtered through the Adam-Moses-typology and is certainly not used polemically.

Adam's creation in the image of God, Christ is called the ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης κτλ., characterising him as the image of God and archetypal man.

There is one more point of contact with the Adam-Moses-typology of Memar Marqah: The unique predication of Christ as ἀπόστολος in Heb 3:1 has an analogy in the predication of Moses as "apostle / envoy of God", שליחה דאלה, in Memar Marqah 5, § 3.[49]

Thus, Heb incorporates a Moses-Christ-typology, which is based on an Adam-Moses-typology, into his own Adam-Christology. Christ is faithful over God's house, as Moses was faithful in God's house (Heb 3:2-6). The "we" of 3:6 are called "God's house", Israel. Thus, Heb 3:1-6 illustrates how Christ, a new Moses, takes the descendants of Abraham, but not the angels, into his care (cf. 2:16). This juxtaposition of Israel and the angels evokes the traditional motif of angelic opposition to God's favour for Moses / Israel which Heb 3:1-6 (though it is not explicitly mentioned here) presupposes.

5.4 Christ and the angels as mediators of revelation – Heb 2:1-4

We finally turn to Heb 2:1-4. The rivalry motif is not taken up explicitly here, either, but it is obviously presupposed, since the immediately following V.5 cites it as the reason (γάρ) for what V.1-4 have to say. The reasoning behind this argument is as follows:

Heb 2:1-4 emphasises the superiority of the revelation "spoken through the Lord", i.e., Christ, to that which was mediated by angels, i.e., at mount Sinai. This takes up Christ's superiority over the angels as established in Heb 1:4-14, and it shows how angels are "ministering spirits" for the sake of humans (1:14): They had to serve Israel precisely by mediating the revelation of the Torah, which, according to Jewish tradition (cf. 5.2), they opposed. More importantly, as we found in Heb 3:1-6, the interpretation of Christ as new Adam includes his interpretation as new Moses who, as mediator of a superior revelation, brings back the lost glory of Adam. This is why it is so important to hold fast to and to obey the revelation "spoken through the Lord": It gives humans dominion over the world to come – a position which angels will never attain (V.5).

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49 Macdonald, Memar Marqah I, 123; II, 201; cf. Lierman, New Testament 71-72.

<center>5.5 Result</center>

Moses is the representative of Israel and mediator of revelation for God's people. Heb integrates both these functions into his Adam-christology which, from 1:3 on, underlies the argument and which extends, with the transformation of the Adam-Moses-typology into a Moses-Christ-typology, until 3:1-6. Before the background of traditions about angelic opposition against God's favour for Israel, Christ mediates the ultimate revelation, brings back the glory of Adam, and bestows dominion over the world to come: In short, he takes Abraham's descendants, not angels, into his care (2:16).

6. Angels in the Epistle to the Hebrews – the wider context

Finally, what has all this got to do with the rest of the epistle? As mentioned before, Heb presupposes traditional Christology and reinterprets it in order to show its soteriological significance. To do so, he re-interprets the exalted Christ as heavenly high priest. After the rivalry motif has been taken up one last time in 2:16, Heb introduces the ἀρ-χιερεύς-predicate for the first time in 2:17-18. The argument concerning Christ, humans, and angels has demonstrated the enormous soteriological potential which the traditional ὁμολογία about the exalted Christ holds. Thus the "ministering spirits" have fulfilled their task. The High Priest-Christology of Heb will show how the exalted Christ can bring many "sons" to heavenly glory (2:10).

7. Conclusion

To understand the first two chapters of Heb, we need to understand what they have to say about angels. It is before this backdrop that Heb develops his Christology and anthropology. The motif of rivalry between angels and humans is the connecting thread which runs through all of Heb 1-2. The argument as a whole is deeply embedded in early Jewish and early Christian tradition. Out of his ample knowledge of tradition, the author of Heb has formed a theological statement which is at the same time genuinely new and his own.

   Why, then, does Heb talk about angels? The epistle does not engage in polemics against angel-worship. Rather, it determines Christ's relationship with God as well as his relationship with humans in contrast to the angels. Set over against the angels, the lowliness and suffering

which Christ took upon himself – the fate of all humans – are highlighted, and Christ's exaltation and superiority over the angels are stressed to show the greatness of the destiny which awaits humans. Heb talks about angels to make it clear what it means to be fully human.

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Angels, the Final Age and 1-2Corinthians in Light Of The Dead Sea Scrolls

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1. Introduction

The Letters of Paul the apostle attest to an expectation of the final age which has been characterised by many exegetes in terms of a tension between the inauguration of a new age by Jesus' resurrection and the Parousia. Pauline eschatology has been the subject of extensive debate.[1] A relatively neglected issue concerns the question whether and in which way angels and the relation between human and heavenly beings play a part in Paul's eschatologically oriented perspective. Comparative studies on angels in early Judaism and emerging Christianity usually focus on other parts of the New Testament. For instance, the Loren T. Stuckenbruck's monograph on 'Angel Veneration and Christology' is oriented towards the Apocalypse of John, while the monograph by Crispin H.T. Fletcher-Louis turns to 'Luke-Acts: Angels, Christology and Soteriology'.[2] James D.G. Dunn in fact observes a 'relative detachment' on the part of Paul on the issue of heavenly powers, and claims that, borrowing a term from Rudolph Bultmann, Paul "engaged in his own demythologization at this point".[3] Nevertheless, the variety of references to ἄγγελοι in Paul's Letters (1Cor 4:9, 6:3, 11:10, 13:1; 2 Cor 11:14, 12:7; Gal 1:8, 3:19, 4:14; Rom 8:38-39) merits further attention with regard to tacit assumptions in Paul's communication with his readers. This is exactly due to the fact that Paul does not provide extensive description or definition of heavenly powers, while yet mentioning them in varying settings.

Paul's references to angels are ambiguous. Angels can serve as part of a rhetorical *a minori ad maius* statement in Galatians 1:8 that not even

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1 Dunn, Theology 461-498, gives a survey of discussion about 'the eschatological tension' in Paul's theology.
2 Stuckenbruck, Angel; Fletcher-Louis, Luke-Acts.
3 Dunn, Theology 104-110,110.

'an angel from heaven', ἄγγελος ἐξ οὐρανοῦ can invalidate the gospel as preached by the apostle to the Galatians. In the same letter, Paul yet reminds the Galatian readers about their initial reception of his gospel that they received him 'as an angel of God', ὡς ἄγγελος θεοῦ (Gal 4:14). This figurative mention of an 'angel of God' could stand in a biblical tradition of figurative speech according to which the angel of God stands for wisdom of God and the discernment of good and evil.[4] In Romans 8:38-39, Paul mentions angels and principalities, οὔτε ἄγγελοι οὔτε ἀρχαί,[5] as part of the creation to make the rhetorical point that nothing separates believers from 'the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord'. More substantial references to angels occur in the Corinthian correspondence at both figurative and literal levels of meaning, and it is in these Letters that Paul is most outspoken about the end of the ages in terms of resurrection (1Cor 15; 2 Cor 5:1-10). For this reason this article will focus on the Corinthian correspondence.

The theocentric imagery of angels noted above as well as references to Satan and his angels in 2 Cor 11:14 and 12:7 suggest a biblical and early Jewish matrix for Pauline thought about angels. It may therefore be expected that biblical and early Jewish tradition provide evidence which may illuminate Pauline passages about angels in individual cases. Much work has been done in the study of early Jewish angelology as a subject in its own right[6] and as a comparative context for New Testament, with occasional attention for Pauline and Deutero-Pauline evidence.[7] Recently published Qumran texts, like *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* (4Q400-407; cf. MasShirShabb),[8] *4QInstruction* (4Q415-418c),[9] and also fragments of *4QMessianic Apocalypse*[10] (4Q521 7+5 II) are

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4   Cf. 2Samuel 14:17.20, 19:27.

5   See Carr, Angels. One variant reading of Romans 8:38 has οὔτε ἀρχαὶ οὔτε ἐξουσίαι, the combination of terms further occurs in Colossians and Ephesians.

6   See Mach, Entwicklungsstadien; Davidson, Angels. On divine messenger terminology in the Old Testament, see Hirth, Gottes; Röttger, Mal'ak Jahweh. The subject of angels in rabbinic literature is covered in the study by Schäfer, Rivalität. See also the contribution of B. Rebiger in the present volume.

7   Stuckenbruck, Angel, pays further attention to Gal 4:3.8-9.19-20 (104-111), Colossians 2:18 (111-119), and Hebrews (119-139) as examples of polemical New Testament texts, but does not consider 1-2Corinthians in detail; Fletcher-Louis, Luke-Acts, pays minor comparative attention to Pauline evidence about angels.

8   Official publication of 4Q400-407 (4QShirShabba-h) and Mas1k (*Massada Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*) by Newsom, Qumran Cave 4, 173-401. Note that the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice are also associated with 'Angelic liturgy': Charlesworth / Newsom, Dead Sea.

9   Editio princeps: Strugnell / Harrington, Qumran. For correction and different reconstruction see Tigchelaar, Learning. On the evidence about angels, see recently Wold, Women 124-182.

10 Editio princeps: Puech, Qumrân 1-38.

among new evidence which contributes to our picture of Palestinian Jewish thought about angels. This and other Qumran evidence motivates the separate attention for the Dead Sea Scrolls as Jewish background in this article.

The search to advance the understanding of Pauline angelic imagery in light of biblical and early Jewish tradition ties in with the apostle's Jewish background, the influence of Christian Jews like Apollos and Cephas as missionaries in Corinth, and the presupposition of the Corinthian readers' knowledge of biblical tradition to some extent.[11] This is not to deny possible connections with conceptions of cosmology and transcendent powers in Graeco-Roman culture, but it seems unlikely that Paul had a pagan concept in mind when speaking about angels.[12] This becomes clear from Paul's unequivocal denouncement of idolatry (1Cor 10:14-22) and from his depracating designation of a pagan temple as εἰδωλεῖον (1Cor 8:10).

The below discussion will first provide a survey of angels in biblical and early Jewish tradition with separate attention for the Dead Sea Scrolls. We will then review the Pauline passages in 1-2Corinthians in light of possible connections with early Jewish tradition. The article will conclude with an evaluation of the question which part angels play in Paul's theology and situate Paul's thought among other angelic traditions in emerging Christianity.

2. Angels in Biblical and Early Jewish Tradition

This survey of biblical and early Jewish tradition is not intended to be comprehensive, but to give an impression of the diversified types of biblical and early Jewish texts and settings in which the supernatural realm of angels is inscribed. The described or implied relation of angels as transcendent powers to human reality is a main point of comparative interest.

2.1 The Pentateuch

The biblical narrative of the flood (Genesis 6:5-8:22) is preceded by an enigmatic passage about the union between the 'sons of God',

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11 See on this Hogeterp, Paul 117-118, 197-235. 306-309.
12 For examples of usage of ἄγγελοι as transcendent powers in pagan religion, see BDAG 8.

בְּנֵי־אֱלֹהִים, and women (Gen 6:1-4). The Hebrew term is usually taken to stand for angels,[13] and one manuscript of the Septuagint (Codex Alexandrinus) in fact translates this term in Gen 6:2 as ἄγγελοι τοῦ θεοῦ. The place which this passage has just before the divine realization of great wickedness on earth (Gen 6:5) may imply an ambivalent if not negative perception of these angelic beings and the consequences of their actions; an impression confirmed by a later interpretive tradition attested in the work of Flavius Josephus and apocalyptic tradition.[14]

Angelic activity on earth is represented as stemming from divine involvement in several Genesis stories. An angel of the Lord visits Hagar in the wilderness (Gen 16:7-14, 21:17), intervenes against the sacrifice of Isaac (Gen 22:11.15), is sent before Isaac for the promise of prosperity (Gen 24:7.40), and is mentioned by Jacob as his redeemer from all evil (Gen 48:16). The visit of three men to Abraham at the oaks of Mamre and their role in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 18-19) can be associated with theophany and angelic activity, as the flow of the text (Gen 18:22, 19:1) indicates, and interpretive traditions in Josephus and Qumran evidence further confirm this.[15] Angels of God further appear in Jacob's dreams (Gen 28:10-17, 31:11-13) and they are met by Jacob (Gen 32:1).[16] In some cases, such as Genesis 16:7-14, the angelic appearance is in fact an expression of theophany.[17]

An angelic appearance marks the theophany to Moses (Exod 3:2) and the exodus of the people of Israel to the promised land is accompanied by an angel of God who goes before them (Exod 14:19, 23:20.23; 32:34, 33:2; Num 20:16). As part of Moses' blessing of Israel (Deut 33:1-

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13 See e.g. Newsom, Angels 248-253 at 248 who stresses the rich Hebrew vocabulary for angels: מלאכים, צבאות, משרתים, קדשים, אלהים, בני אלים, בני האלהים. With regard to cases in which אלהים designates angelic beings, it has been noted that the Septuagint rendering ἄγγελοι could also be viewed as a Jewish response to pagan polytheism; see Mach, Entwicklungsstadien 2-3. – Fletcher-Louis, Luke-Acts 4 n. 16 mentions a number of examples in which the LXX renders אלהים as ἄγγελοι (LXX Psalm 8:5, 97:7, 138:1; Isa 9:5; Dan 2:11 OG).

14 On apocalyptic tradition, see section 2.4 below. In his Biblical Antiquities (Ant. 1.73), Flavius Josephus attributes to the sons begotten through the union between the 'angels of God' and women that they were "overbearing and disdainful of every virtue, such confidence had they in their strength" (translation from Thackeray, Josephus 35), while further comparing them to Greek mythology about the giants.

15 Josephus, Ant. 1.196 (τρεῖς ἄγγελοι); 4Q180 (4QAges of Creation A) 2-4 II 3-4 [שלושה אנשים אשר יראו אל אברה]ם באלוני ממרה מלאכים המה.

16 The passage about Jacob's wrestling with a divine being, after which Jacob receives the name 'Israel' (Gen 32:22-32) is further interpreted as Jacob's wrestling with an angel in 'inner-biblical exegesis' (MT Hos 12:4, LXX Hos 12:5) and later interpretive tradition (Josephus, Ant. 1.331-334).

17 For a survey of intersections and distinction between theophany and angelophany, see Mach, Entwicklungsstadien 56-60.

29), Deuteronomy 33:2 refers to God who revealed himself from Sinai as having come "from the ten thousands of holy ones with flaming fire at his right hand" (RSV).

2.2 Prophetic Literature[18]

Angels do not appear to play a role of major significance in the books of Isaiah and Jeremiah.[19] Isaiah 6 mentions the so-called 'seraphim' in the story about Isaiah's call and the divine punishment of the 'host of heaven' (Isa 24:21) as well as of Leviathan (Isa 27:1) are part of the 'Isaiah apocalypse' (Isa 24-27). Jeremiah 23:18-22 denounces false prophecy by rhetorically questioning whether any of those so-called prophets has stood in 'the council of the Lord' (Jer 23:18.22). In most instances the revelation of words of the Lord to Isaiah and Jeremiah is expressed in a more direct way without the intermediation of angelic figures. The throne chariot vision in Ezekiel 1:4-28a gives visionary expression to the glory of the Lord surrounded by supernatural winged creatures whose connection with angelic 'Cherubim' has been pointed out in previous scholarship.[20]

In the Minor Prophets, the term 'angel/messenger of the Lord' (מלאך יהוה / ὁ ἄγγελος κυρίου) can be a designation for the prophet himself (Hag 1:13) as well as a mediating figure in visions of the Lord revealed to the prophet (Zech 1:8-17; cf. Zech 4:1-14, 5:5-11, 6:1-8). Malachi 2:7 likens the role of a priest to that of 'the messenger of the Lord of hosts'; an example which indicates that the terminology leaves room for both human and heavenly functions.[21] The relation of the (high)priesthood to the heavenly, in particular angelic realm, is visualised in Zechariah 3:1-10, which evokes a heavenly court scene in which השטן / ὁ διάβολος as adversary accuses the high priest, while the angel of the Lord acquits him.

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18 Daniel, which was counted among the Prophets in first-century CE Jewish and Christian tradition (Matt 24:15; 4Q174 1 II, 3, 24, 5, l. 3), will be discussed in section 2.4 about apocalyptic tradition.

19 Cf. the survey in Mach, Entwicklungsstadien 60-63.

20 Mach, Entwicklungsstadien 36 refers to connections between Ezek 1, 3 and 10. Cf. Exod 25:10-22, 1Kgs 6:23-28.

21 Fletcher-Louis, Luke-Acts 110-139 at 118, counts Mal 2:7 among Jewish angelomorphic traditions about kings, priests and prophets; a trajectory followed in post-biblical Jewish texts according to Fletcher-Louis.

2.3 Other Biblical Writings

Judg recounts the appearance of the angel of the Lord to Gideon (Judg 6:11-24), to the wife of Manoah to announce the birth of Samson (Judg 13:3-7), and to Manoah (Judg 13:11-21). The human and angelic realms are described as analogous to each other in Judg 13:6, which observes about the 'the appearance of the man of God' (HT איש האלהים LXX: ἄνθρωπος τοῦ θεοῦ) that it was 'like the appearance of the angel of God', כמראה מלאך האלהים (MT) / ὡς εἶδος ἀγγέλου θεοῦ (LXX).

The biblical historiography of the time from Samuel to the last descendants of the house of David at the time of the Babylonian exile, as recounted in 1-2Samuel, 1-2Kings and 1-2Chronicles, includes some evidence about angels. 2Samuel 14:17.20 and 19:27 attests to homage to king David in figurative speech which likens him to an angel of God. 1Kings 19:1-18 narrates a divine revelation to Elijah on Mount Horeb through the appearance of the angel of the Lord (1Kgs 19:7).[22] The wreaking of destruction is also attributed to an angel of the Lord (2Sam 24:15-16 / 1Chron 21:12-16.27).

Angelic functions in the Psalter vary between deliverance of those who fear the Lord (Pss 34:7, 91:11), vengeance against adversaries (Pss 35:5-6, 78:49), and heavenly worship of God (LXX Ps 96:7, 137:1; Pss 103:20, 148:1-2).

2.4 Apocalyptic Tradition

Angels make an integral part of apocalyptic tradition,[23] since they serve as mediating and even interpreting figures in heavenly revelations and dream visions (e.g. *1En* 1:2, 108:5; LXX Dan 2:11). The proverbial 'angelus interpres' is further an important part of many later apocalyptic texts (e.g. *4 Ezra* 4:1, 5:31, 7:1, 10:29; *Asc.Isa.*; *Visio Pauli*).

It is in early Jewish apocalyptic tradition, as represented by *1En* and Daniel, that the eschatological role of angels comes into view. In the otherworldly journey of Enoch, described in *1En* 20-36, Enoch successively asks the seven archangels, named in *1En* 20, questions about the places he sees. These places turn out to be related to the eschatological fate of the dead (*1En* 22:1-14, 24-32) as well as the punishment of disobedient stars (*1En* 21:1-5) and imprisonment of the fallen angels (*1En*

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22 Note that verses from 1Kgs 19 are cited by Paul in Romans 11:2-4, albeit in terms of theophany.

23 Cf. Collins, Imagination 55-59, on Enoch's otherworldly journey guided by angels in *1En* 17, 21-27, and 104-107, on angels as 'the holy ones of the Most High' in Daniel.

21:7-10). Dan 12:1-3, which envisages the final age in terms of tribulation and resurrection, mentions the role of the archangelic figure Michael[24] in leading the people at the time of tribulation (Dan 12:1).

2.5 Sapiential Tradition

Angels as transcendent powers do not seem to play a clearly discernible role in the biblical wisdom books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, but they do figure in Job and the book of Tobit.[25] A minor reference to angels further occurs in the Wisdom of Solomon 16:20, which calls manna 'food of angels' in a comparable manner as Psalm 78:25 does.[26]

The biblical narrative of the sufferings of Job is introduced by heavenly court scenes in which Satan discusses with God about Job (Job 1:6, 2:1, 38:7, a'). Part of the otherworldly setting of Job is the mention of angelic figures, called, בני האלהים 'sons of God', in MT Job 1:6, 2:1, 38:7; a Hebrew term which is consistently translated in the Septuagint as οἱ ἄγγελοι τοῦ θεοῦ. In Job 5:1, one of the friends of Job (Job 2:11, 4:1) asks him rhetorical question to which of the 'holy ones' (קדשים in MT Job 5:1 / ἄγγελοι ἅγιοι in LXX Job 5:1) he will turn. Job 33:22-28 mentions the mediatory role of an angel before God to deliver a human being from death.[27] Job represents a sapiential tradition of profound reflection about theodicy and, as part of this, the question of angelic functions in face of human suffering. Yet the angelic praise of God's creation (Job 38:7) is presupposed in divine discourse in the book of Job.

The narrative of Tobit gives expression to the attendance of the angel Rafael to Tobit's son Tobias on his journey as a sign of God's providence (Tob 5:16.21, 6, 8:2-3, 11-12). The book of Tobit attributes praise of God and works of piety to angelic instruction (Tob 12:6-10) and the human recognition of great and wonderful works of God through the appearance of the angel of the Lord (Tob 12:22).

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24 On Michael as one of the seven archangels, see *1En* 20:1-8 at v.5: "Michael, one of the holy angels, who has been put in charge of the good ones of the people" (translation from Nickelsburg /VanderKam, Enoch 40. About the influence of *1En* on Daniel 7-12, see e.g. Collins, Imagination 104-115.

25 In including Tobit here, I follow the characterization of Tobit by Kaiser, Old Testament Apocrypha 31 as "a wisdom moral tale with novelistic features".

26 With regard to the biblical tradition about manna as food for the people in the wilderness, Paul speaks of 'spiritual food', πνευματικὸν βρῶμα, in 1Cor 10:3.

27 HT Job 33:23 מלאך מליץ אחד מני־אלף – LXX Job 33:23 χίλιοι ἄγγελοι θανατηφόροι.

2.6 Historical Works

Apocryphal and early Jewish historical works comprise references to angels in contexts of political discussion and warfare. It is an intriguing fact that one and the same biblical example of an angel of God who struck down the Assyrians (2Kgs 19:35 / Isa 37:36) occurs in discourses with opposite political intentions: one of Maccabean hope of military victory (1Macc 7:41; 2Macc 15:22-27) and the other of Flavius Josephus to dissuade from war against Rome (*J.W.* 5.388). Josephus, writing from the hindsight perspective of decades after the Roman victory which concluded the Jewish war against Rome (66-70 CE), has Agrippa call God's holy angels and Jerusalem to witness that war against Rome will lead to ruin and defeat (*J.W.* 2.401). Josephus further points to visions of heavenly chariots and battle arrays which were to be explained as signs of doom rather than victory (*J.W.* 6.298).

Soteriological and imminent expectations which envisage an active role of angels are part of the earlier Maccabean literature. 2Macc 2:21 mentions appearances from heaven to 'those who strove zealously on behalf of Judaism' (RSV), while 2Macc 11:6 describes an entreaty to God to send a 'good angel to save Israel'. 3 Macc 6:18 likewise underlines the delivery of the Maccabean forces in face of the enemies through the descendance of angel. In addition to these historical works, the Qumran *War Scroll* also attests to the idea that angels would join the armies of Israel (1QM VII 6, XII 8) against the 'Kittim', i.e., the Romans.[28] Even the rhetorical reference to the sending of twelve legions of angels in Matthew 26:53 may be an indirect echo of this horizon of expectations.[29]

2.7 The Dead Sea Scrolls

Much earlier discussion of angels in Qumran literature has focused on sectarian texts which envisage present communion and inheritance of those whom God has chosen with the 'sons of heaven', i.e., the angels (1QS XI 7-9) and of the individual protagonist in the so-called Teacher Hymns with them (1QHᵃ X 13, XI 19-23).[30] To this longer-known sectarian evidence, E.G. Chazon recently added the discussion of a number

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28 Schürer, History 241 n. 30: "Today there is quasi-unanimity in identifying the victorious Kittim of Qumran literature with the Romans".

29 Cf. Hagner, Matthew 789-790. Paul does not give outright expression to such a horizon of expectation about angelic participation in eschatological war. 1Thess 4:16 and 1Cor 15:24-28 appear to make residual reference to an eschatological scenario of destruction of every rule of enemies, with an angelic part in this scenario (1Thess 4:16), but Paul transposes the apocalyptic imagery to the subject of resurrection.

30 See e.g. Kuhn, Enderwartung 66-73; Mach, Entwicklungsstadien 209-216.

of liturgical texts, 4Q503 (*Daily Prayers*), *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, *4QBerakhot*, of which only the latter text is clearly rooted in the sectarian Qumran community as its community terminology indicates.[31]

The *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* include mention of psalms of praise, thanksgiving, and exultation uttered by the tongues of seven 'chief princes' to exalt God (Mas1k II // 4Q403 1 I 1-29 // 4Q404 2+3AB // 4Q405 3 II). The place of seven chief princes in this angelic liturgy could echo the apocalyptic tradition of *1En* 20 which distinguishes seven archangels.[32] The *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* provide a very diversified vocabulary to designate heavenly angels, such as, for instance, 'exalted angels', מלאכי רום; 'spirits of the holy of holies', רוחי קודש קודשים; 'living divinities', אלוהים חיים; and 'holy ones', קדושים.[33]

The longer-known sectarian Qumran texts attest to a dualism between angels of God and of Satan and between the realms which these respective angels stand for. The 'Treatise of the Two Spirits' (1QS III 13 – IV 26) juxtaposes the dominion of the 'prince of lights', שר אורים, over the sons of righteousness to the dominion of the 'angel of darkness', מלאך חושך, over the sons of evil as well as over corruption of the sons of righteousness (1QS III 20-22). The Damascus Document expresses the view that only when one returns to the Law of Moses and keeps one's words (by observing it), then "the angel Mastema will turn aside from following him," יסור מלאך המשטמה מאחריו (CD-A XVI 4-5 // 4QD^f 4 II 6-7).[34]

The sapiential Qumran text *4QInstruction* with apocalyptic elements[35] also comprises evidence about angels which has recently become the subject of intensive study by B.G. Wold.[36] Main examples in Wold's analysis are the 'formation (of humanity)' "according the image of the holy ones" (כתבנית קדושים) in 4Q417 1 I 15-18,[37] as Wold translates it; a

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31 Chazon, Communion 95-105. A short discussion of some preliminarily published fragments of the Qumran *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* was included in the survey of liturgical and cultic communion with angels by Mach, Entwicklungsstadien 229-235.

32 Chazon, Communion 101, refers to 'angelic chief princes' in this regard; cf. also Mach, Angels 25.

33 In this respect, Mach, Angels 25, deems the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* to be "a classical source for a fully developed angelology".

34 Text and translation from García Martínez / Tigchelaar, Dead Sea 564-565.

35 On the combination of wisdom and apocalypticism in a text like *4QInstruction*, see recently Collins, Mysteries 287-305; Goff, Wisdom 68: "4QInstruction is the best example available of a wisdom text with an apocalyptic worldview".

36 Wold, Women 124-182.

37 Text reference according to DJD 34; this is 4Q417 2 I 15-18 in García Martínez / Tigchelaar, Dead Sea 858-859.

model of divine parenthood with reference to God and angels (אדנים),[38] in 4Q416 2 III 15-18; and the references to angels as קדושים and [א][ל]ים in 4Q418 fragment 81 lines 1-14.

4QMessianic Apocalypse (4Q521) 7+5 II 15 mentions angels, מלכים, as part of a fragment which presents an eschatological vision about death as destiny for the 'accursed' (ll. 5, 13) and life as destiny for 'the dead of his people', for those who do good before the Lord (ll. 4, 6). The angels in this fragment (l. 15) appear to be associated with the heavens (l. 14).

3. The Pauline Evidence on Angels in 1-2 Corinthians Reconsidered

3.1 'A Spectacle to Angels and to Men', 1Corinthians 4:9

The first mention of angels in Paul's Corinthian correspondence occurs in 1Cor 4:9 in the context of Paul's response to Corinthian boasting of wisdom and honour (1Cor 4:8-13; cf. 1Cor 1:10-17.26-31). In 1Cor 4:9, Paul writes the following: "For I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death; because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels and to men" (RSV).

The imagery of this verse, θέατρον τῷ κόσμῳ καὶ ἀγγέλοις καὶ ἀνθρώποις, has been compared with that of the public spectacle of an arena with gladiators,[39] but the mention of angels and Paul's association of his apostleship with a sentence to death could point in a different direction. While Paul has cited a passage from the book of Job (Job 5:13) among other biblical passages to denounce the 'wisdom of the world' (1Cor 3:19), it could also be that the imagery of 1Cor 4:9 alludes to the rhetorical question in Job 5:1 to whom of the angels a person in suffering and anguish can turn. Paul phrases his hardship in a provocative way as a 'spectacle'. A parallel to the language of hardship may further be noted in the Qumran *Hodayot*, which describes God's protection of the 'spring of life' and the mystery of 'powerful heroes and spirits of holiness' on the one hand and the protagonist's fate of mockery on the other (1QH[a] XVI 11-15). The *Hodayot* also include mention of divine judgement against 'powerful heroes' and divine dispute (ריבכה) with

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38 'Angels' is the translation by Wold, Women 149-156; García Martínez / Tigchelaar, Dead Sea 2, 852-853 translate דונים as 'masters'.

39 Thiselton, Epistle 360.

the 'host of your holy ones', צבא קדושיכ֗ (1QHᵃ XVIII 34-35).[40] The contrast between the contemporary reception of Paul's apostleship with contempt and ostracism, expressed in 1Cor 4:8-13, and the apostle's claim of sincerity as 'servant of Christ and steward of the mysteries of God' to be judged by the Lord only at the final age (1Cor 4:1-5) could not be clearer.

3.2 Judgement of Angels, 1Corinthians 6:2-3

In 1Corinthians 6:2-3 Paul confronts his readers with a double rhetorical question whether they do not know that the saints will judge the world and that 'we are to judge angels', ἀγγέλους κρινοῦμεν (1Cor 6:3 RSV), in order to divert them from taking part in trivial cases before unbelievers (1Cor 6:1-8). The eschatological judgement of angels is rhetorically juxtaposed to 'ordinary (everyday) matters', τὰ βιωτικά, in the same verse.

The notion of negative ambivalence about angels starts with Genesis 6:1-4 and is further elaborated in apocalyptic tradition (*1En* 21:7-10). The evidence of Qumran literature provides several examples of negative ambiguity about angels, of which one, God's dispute with the 'host of the holy ones' in 1QHᵃ XVIII 34-35 has just been mentioned. Another Qumran text, 4Q181 (*4QAges of Creation B*) 1 II 1-4, contrasts the delivery of "the sons of the he[avens] and the earth to a wicked community until its end" because of their evil and impurity to the glorious lot of "some from among the sons of the world .. (to be) considered with him in the com[munity of] [the di]vinities to be a holy congregation in the position of eternal life and in the lot with his holy ones".[41] Although this text does not mention human judgement of angels, the contrast between fallen angels and exalted human beings seems to come close to this thought.

3.3 1Corinthians 11:10

In 1Cor 11:10, Paul insists on women wearing a veil during worship (cf. 1Cor 11:5.13) 'on account of the angels'. While it is not clear how this passage would relate to Paul's eschatological perspective, I will briefly mention some comparative interpretations. J.A. Fitzmyer interprets the

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40   Text and translation: García Martínez / Tigchelaar, Dead Sea 2 180-181, 188-189.
41   Translation: García Martínez / Tigchelaar, Dead Sea 1 373.

passage in comparison with Qumran texts 1QM VII 4-6 and 1QSa II 3-11 which focus on bodily perfection in view of angelic accompaniment of and presence in the community.[42] A more recent explanation by Dale C. Martin in apocalyptic terms with reference to Genesis 6 and *1En 7* in fact returns to an older interpretation.[43]

3.4 'Tongues of angels', 1Corinthians 13:1

In 1Cor 13:1, Paul mentions 'tongues of men and of angels' at the beginning of an enumeration of spiritual talents to stress the point that they cannot have a meaning in themselves apart from faith, hope, and, most of all love. It has been a debated point what 'speaking in tongues', including those of angels, means,[44] and examples from early Christian literature, Graeco-Roman literature, and *Testament of Job* have been explored for comparative analysis by Dale C. Martin.[45] The Dead Sea Scrolls bring new evidence into this discussion, in that the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* attest to an angelic liturgy with references to hymns of praise uttered by the tongues of angelic 'chief princes' (Mas1k II // 4Q403 1 I 1-29 // 4Q404 2+3AB // 4Q405 3 II).

3.5 1Corinthians 15

Paul's digression on the resurrection in 1Corinthians 15 is focused on eschatological participation in Christ's resurrection. At the same time, Paul uses imagery related to celestial bodies (1Cor 15:40-44) and conceives of those who share in Christ's resurrection as 'those who are of heaven' (οἱ ἐπουράνιοι, 1Cor 15:48) in order to visualize the resurrection body. This may indirectly indicate the perceived angelic post-resurrection state[46] which is explicitly brought to the fore in the Synoptic tradition (Mark 12:25 par.). A comparison between the eschatological imagery in 1Cor 15:51-58 and 1Thess 4:13-18 implies a connection between the expected Parousia, the sounding of the trumpet, and the 'archan-

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42 Fitzmyer, Feature 48-58; updated and reprinted in Fitzmyer, Background 187-204.

43 Martin, Body 242-245; Fitzmyer, Feature 196-197, refers to this in his view inadequate interpretation about 'protection against the fallen angels'.

44 Thiselton, Epistle 970-988, distinguishes various interpretations of 'species of tongues' in 1Cor 12:10c, among which "Tongues as Angelic Speech" (972-973), thereby referring to pseudepigraphical texts (T.Job 48:1-50:3; Jub 25:14; T.Judah 25:3; 1En 40, 71:11; 4 Macc 10:21).

45 Martin, Body 88-92.

46 Cf. Fletcher-Louis, Luke-Acts 12 n. 54.

gel's call' (1Thess 4:16), which precede the resurrection. Paul omits the latter archangelic image in 1Cor 15, because his focus is on the defence of the bodily resurrection of the deceased per se.

3.6 2Corinthians 11:14

In his polemic against false apostles (2Cor 11:3-6.12-15), Paul compares their disguise as apostles of Christ with a *a minori ad maius* statement with Satan who 'disguises himself as an angel of light'. This archetypal example is followed through by the pronouncement that 'their end will correspond to their deeds' (2Cor 11:15; RSV).

   This polemical imagery appears to tie in with apocalyptic imagery, comparable to statements as in the Qumran Community Rule that the 'angel of darkness' is behind the corruption of the sons of righteousness and fall of the sons of light (1QS III 21-25)

3.7 2Corinthians 12:7

In 2Cor 12:1-10, where Paul speaks of heavenly revelations which are yet to be kept as 'things not to be told' (v.4), the apostle also mentions his affliction by an 'angel of Satan', ἄγγελος σατανᾶ (v.7) "to harass me, to keep me from being too elated" (RSV). Analogously, 1QHᵃ gives voice to personal affliction and disease by Belial's presence (1QHᵃ XV 2-5; cf. 1QHᵃ XVI 26-35).

4. Evaluation and Conclusion

The diversified literary settings of biblical and early Jewish tradition which we have surveyed indicate that the references to angels are inherent in biblical tradition and were part and parcel of Jewish worldviews at Paul's time. To this one could also add gospel traditions on the part of emerging Christianity such as those which speak of angels as messengers who announce Jesus' birth (Matt 1:18-25; Luke 2:8-14) and Jesus' resurrection (Matt 28:2-3; Luke 24:23, ὀπτασία ἀγγέλων). On the other hand, Paul omits any angelic reference in his account of resurrection witnesses (1Cor 15:1-11). Where does this leave us with regard to the question of angels in Paul's theological worldview?

   Paul's notion of revelation is directly related to faith in Christ, as several passages, such as Gal 1:12; 2Cor 3:14-18, and 12:8-9, may indi-

cate. In this respect, Paul's theology is distant from apocalyptic revelations with an 'angelus interpres', but this is not to say that angels, both good and evil, did not play a part in Paul's worldview, as Romans 8:38-39, 1Cor 4:9, 11:10 and 2Cor 12:7, may indicate. 'Tongues of angels' (1Cor 13:1) may explained in a new way as angelic liturgy in light of the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*.

The possibly angelomorphic connections with the visualized body of resurrection in 1Cor 15 and the envisaged judgement of angels in 1Cor 6:3 attest to the part an angelic state and angels have in Paul's eschatological perspective. The revelation of the question who are 'sons of God' in the creation yet awaits a definitive answer in Paul's thought (Rom 8:19), but the decisive point is whether one is led by the Spirit of God (Rom 8:14). The ambiguity about angels even in eschatological perspective can be compared with certain contemporary Jewish traditions, like *1En* 21:7-10, 1QH^a XVIII 34-35 and 4Q181 1 II 1-4, more than has been previously assumed.

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V.

The Four (or Seven) Archangels
in the First Book of Enoch and Early Jewish
Writings of the Second Temple Period

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1. Introduction and Terminology

Although the monotheistic creed became the fundamental basis of Early Judaism, structures of polytheistic thinking continued to exist in a modified way. The common Ancient Near Eastern idea of a heavenly court, where the supreme deity presides over the assembly of minor deities, lived on in the concept of an angelic world populated by different classes of heavenly beings each fulfilling a specific function. Besides the angels of presence, who stand around the divine throne in constant praise of the Lord, there are also angels that interfere with the human world, e.g. by being responsible for certain natural phenomena (cf. Jub 2:2). However, speculations on the sphere of the angels did not only deal with its differentiation, but focused also on defining a hierarchy. It is in this context that the concept of a group of supreme angels was shaped, who are now universally known as archangels.

It should, however, be noted that the term 'archangel' is somewhat anachronistic when we are dealing with the early stages of this idea. The Greek term ἀρχάγγελος ("ruling angel") from which it derives does not occur in the Septuagint and lacks a Hebrew or Aramaic equivalent. While the First Book of Enoch may have originally used the expression עירין וקדישין ("watchers and holy ones"),[1] the Book of Daniel, the only text in the OT that mentions supreme angels by name, refers to them as "prince" (שר) or counts them among the "chief princes" (השרים הגדלים).[2] In rendering the latter phrase as οἱ ἄρχοντοι οἱ πρῶτοι, the Septuagint is

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[1] See below.

[2] Cf. Dan 10:13, 21; 12:1. A similar terminology is used in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice, which speak of נשיאי רוש (cf. 4Q403 and 4Q405). For an overview on the various Hebrew and Aramaic designations of angelic beings, see Davidson, Angels 327-342.

at least reminiscent of the later terminology, as is the case in Josh 5:14 where the "commander of the army of the Lord" (שר צבא יהוה) was translated as ἀρχιστρατηγός.[3]

Still, the term ἀρχάγγελος, although here may lie part of its origin, has found no way into the Greek translations of the OT. As a designation of the angelic princes, it seems to have become popular only around the turn of the era.[4] Nonetheless, the customary term 'archangel' remains appropriate even with regard to the earlier texts, insofar as it precisely expresses the idea of a group of supreme angels. In this sense it will be used in the following article.

In dealing with the early stages in the development of the concept of archangels, I will primarily focus on the First Book of Enoch which contains the oldest relevant texts. On this basis, other Jewish texts from Second Temple times will be treated. I will first examine those passages of 1En that deal with the number of archangels, and in a second step try to sketch the profiles and tasks of their individual representatives. As a result, only the "good" angelic princes mentioned in the respective lists of archangels will be subject to this article. Their evil opponents are dealt with elsewhere in this volume; cf. Dochhorn, Motif (in this volume).

2. Early Lists of Archangels

As early as the Book of Watchers (1En 6-36), dating in its oldest parts from the fourth century BCE, there are lists that enumerate either four (1En 9:1) or seven archangels (1En 20:1-8).[5] Although diverging in the overall number and in the names of the archangels, both versions share one fundamental similarity in including Michael, Gabriel and Raphael among the angels listed. These three did not only become the most prominent archangels in reception history, they also must have already

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3   Cf. also Theodotion's rendering of the Hebrew השר הגדול in Dan 12:1 (ὁ ἄρχων ὁ μέγας).

4   Possibly the oldest attestation of the term ἀρχάγγελος is found in the Greek translation of 1En (20:8), which may, at its earliest, date from the first century BCE; cf. Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1 14. The term is furthermore attested in writings of the early Christian period (4 Ezra 4:36; 1Thess 4:16; Jude 9).

5   While the Ethiopic translation of 1En 20:1 refers to them as to the "holy angels who watch," the Greek text reads ἄγγελοι τῶν δυνάμεων ("angels of the powers"). Although the original Aramaic version of the verse is not attested by any of the Qumran fragments, it is likely that it referred to עירין וקדישין ("watchers and holy ones"; cf. Dan 4:10, 14, 20). Examples of a similar translation are 1En 1:2 (cf. 4QEnᵃ Fr. 1 I 3) and 93:2 (cf. 4QEnᵍ Fr. 1 III 21). On the subject of terminology, see also Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1 140-141.

claimed a similar status in Early Judaism. However, when we turn towards the remaining angels that are mentioned in the respective lists the picture changes completely. Suddenly the sources offer a diversity of names, which bears witness to an ongoing debate concerning the question of who else was to be counted among the archangels.

This debate is vividly reflected by the different literary parts and translations of 1En The original Aramaic version of 1En 9:1 includes Sariel among the four archangels, thus mentioning מיכאל ושריא[ל ורפאל וג]ברי]אל (4QEnᵇ Fr. 1 III 7).[6] The same four names are also attested in the War Scroll (1QM IX 15-16). However, in the Greek translation of 1En 9:1 Sariel is no longer mentioned, but has been replaced with Uriel (cf. 10:1). Although a scribal error might have caused the change,[7] it should not be overlooked that, with regard to the prominent role of Uriel in 1En 19-21; 72-82 (see below), an intentional alteration cannot be excluded.[8] Still another name completes the list of the four archangels in the latest part of 1 Enoch, the so-called Book of Parables (chs. 37-71).[9] Here, an angel with the name Phanuel appears instead of Sariel / Uriel (1En 40:8-9; 53:6; 70:11, 16).[10]

By identifying the four archangels with the four heavenly beings known from Ezekiel's inaugural vision, 1En 40:9 points to Ezek 1 as to the possible biblical background of the concept of four supreme angelic princes.[11] The basic idea behind the four beings of Ezek 1 is that each of them corresponds to one of the four directions resp. the four quarters of the world which illustrate the spatial dimension of God's mastery of the universe. This idea, which is also attested elsewhere in the OT (cf. e.g. Isa 11:12; Ezek 37:9), has to be seen against the background of a

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6   Cf. 4QEnᵃ Fr. 1 IV 6: [מיכאל [ושריאל ו]רפאל וגברי]אל. The reconstructions of the fragments are based on Milik, Books.

7   Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1 202, suggests that the change results from the confusion of initial *omicron* with initial *sigma*.

8   Uriel is also mentioned as the fourth archangel in Apoc Mos 40:1 and Sib Or 2:215 (manuscript family Ψ; cf. Geffcken, Oracula 38). See, however, Dochhorn, Apokalypse 524, who argues that, on the basis of the variant manuscript readings, one has to assume that Apoc Mos 40:1 originally only mentioned three archangels (Michael, Gabriel and Uriel).

9   That the Book of Parables is the latest part of 1En is shown by the fact that it is not attested in the Aramaic fragments that were found at Qumran. On the complicated questions concerning its origins and literary development, see Black, Book 181-193.

10 On the changing identity of the fourth archangel, see Black, Book 201; Milik, Books 172-173; Yadin, Scroll 238.

11 Cf. Bousset / Gressmann, Religion 326; Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1 207. A similar connection between the four archangels and the beings at the four sides of God's throne is also drawn in Rabbinic writings (Num. Rab. 2:10; Pesiq. Rab. 46:3; Pirqe R. El. 4), with the sole exception that it is again Uriel and not Phanuel who is included in the lists.

"complex Babylonian system of astral and cosmic symbolism"[12] from which it derives. Although one can not be sure, whether the tradition of four archangels is in fact dependent upon the text of Ezek 1, it seems nevertheless likely to conclude that it shares the same Babylonian heritage, although it is no longer focused on cosmological or astronomical questions, but rather interested in angelic hierarchy.

The tradition of seven archangels finds a biblical parallel in Ezek 9. Here, the visionary beholds six men with deadly weapons in their hands who are accompanied by a further, different figure with a writing case (9:2). Due to this particular description of the seven men, Hermann Gunkel has suggested that the respective passage is dependent on a Babylonian tradition that counts seven supreme deities, one of whom is the god of writing Nabu.[13] The parallel is, indeed, conspicuous and could thus point to the background of Ezek 9. Consequently, the concept of seven archangels might have been only one further step on the same line of development. One should, however, not overlook the possibility of a different background: Babylonian lists of seven demons[14] as well as the Persian doctrine of the Heptad, consisting of Ahura Mazdā and the six Aməšas Spəntas,[15] show that groups of seven supernatural beings were quite a frequent phenomenon. How the concept of seven archangels precisely evolved therefore remains an open question.

Notwithstanding the early precursors of the tradition of seven archangels, the earliest extant list that contains their names is only attested in 1En 20. The chapter provides the names of the angels that accompany Enoch on his eastward journey which is reported in 1En 21-36. It mentions Uriel, Raphael, Raguel, Michael, Sariel, Gabriel and Remiel. Yet, it is striking that Remiel, the only one who does not reappear during Enoch's journey, is also textually dubious: the respective verse, 1En 20:8, is altogether missing in the Ethiopic tradition and is only attested in the duplicate section of the Greek Gizeh Papyrus.[16]

The fact that the overall number of seven archangels is first mentioned as the concluding statement of 1En 20:8 makes it appear possible that the list originally only contained the names of the six angelic protagonists of the following narrative. The reason for its secondary expansion might then be found in the attempt to adjust the passage to the

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12 Uehlinger / Müller Trufaut, Ezekiel 1 163.
13 Cf. Gunkel, Schreiberengel 294-300.
14 Cf. Ebeling, Dämonen 107-108.
15 Cf. Boyce, Aməša Spənta 933-936. A Persian background of the seven archangels has already been proposed by Kohut, Angelologie.
16 Cf. Black, Apocalypsis 32.

already existing tradition of seven archangels.[17] Alternatively, one could follow Nickelsburg in assuming that 1En 81:1-4 was originally part of the narrative in 1En 20-36, and that the nameless angel holding the heavenly tablets in 81:1 is no other than Remiel.[18]

Even if one follows Nickelsburg and assumes that the list of the seven archangels in 1En 20 is original, it would still belong to a literary stratum of 1En that is younger than the narrative about the rebellion of the watchers (1En 6-16).[19] The passages in 1En 9-10 that mention only four archangels may therefore claim literary priority. This observation does, of course, not allow the conclusion that the concept of seven archangels is a later development, because both concepts evidently draw on earlier traditions and were not invented by the authors of 1 Enoch. Furthermore, it must not be overlooked that the respective lists appear in distinct contexts: the four archangels are part of the watcher myth, while the seven archangels are connected with Enoch's heavenly journey (1En 20-36).

This last observation is underscored by the Animal Apocalypse (1En 85-90), a text that dates most likely from the time of the Maccabean Revolt.[20] Following the account in the Book of Watchers, 1En 88 describes the binding of the fallen watchers and the destruction of their breed as the work of four archangels (cf. 1En 10). In the preceding chapter, they are accompanied by three additional archangels who lift Enoch onto a high place from where he can watch the following events (1En 87:2-3; cf. 90:31). The latter passage is evidently inspired by the tradition of the seven archangels that accompany Enoch on his heavenly journey. By combining it with the tradition of the four angelic opponents of the fallen watchers, the author of the Animal Apocalypse arrived at a new synthesis: as four of the seven archangels are busy with the punishment of the watchers, the remaining three can show Enoch to his watchtower. Together, all seven return at the time of the final judgment and lead the rebel angels before God's throne where they are to receive their sentence (90:21).

Although it is clear that the author of the Animal Apocalypse counted seven archangels, we learn nothing about their names. The

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17   That "the genuineness [of 1En 20:8] is guaranteed by the number 'seven'" (Black, Book 163) is not a strong argument, but rather a *petitio principii*. At least one example for a list of six archangels is provided by the admittedly late Tg. Ps.-J. ad Deut 34:6.

18   Cf. Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1 335-338.

19   While 1En 6-16 may date back to the last quarter of the fourth century BCE, chs. 20-36 seem to be no earlier than the late third century BCE; cf. Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1 170.293.

20   Cf. Berner, Jahre 169-181; Tiller, Commentary 78-79; VanderKam, Enoch 162.

allegoric text of the Animal Apocalypse only speaks of "white men" and leaves their identity a matter to be discussed by the readers.[21] This silence with regard to the names, which is shared by Tob 12:15, the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice,[22] Test Levi 8, and Rev 1:4,[23] leads us back to the earliest extant list in 1En 20. It may have already been in the mind of the author of the Animal Apocalypse[24] and will now serve as the basis of the following section of this article, which deals with the individual archangels.

3. The individual profiles and tasks of the seven archangels

The first archangel mentioned in 1En 20 is Uriel "who is in charge of the world and of Tartarus" (20:2). The connection of Uriel with Tartarus alludes to 1En 21:5, 9 (cf. 19:1) where it is the aforesaid angel who shows Enoch the places where the disobedient stars and the fallen angels are imprisoned. That Uriel is furthermore put in charge of the world (ἐπὶ τοῦ κόσμου) is most likely to be taken as a reference to the Astronomical Book (1En 72-82; cf. 33:3-4). In this text, of all the archangels only Uriel appears and guides Enoch through the celestial sphere. As the leader of the heavenly luminaries, he explains their courses and the laws they obey, thus providing information for the true calendar (72:1; 74:2; 75:3-4; 78:10; 79:6; 80:1; 82:7).[25]

Both aspects, the dominion over the fiery depths and over the course of the luminaries, could easily be connected with the archangel's name: Uriel, when derived from the Hebrew term אור, would have to be translated as "God is my fire," which would stress the former aspect, while the latter would be implied, if one deduced the name from the term אור, thus interpreting it as "God is my light."[26] Therefore, it is not

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21 1En 90:22 counts the writer that records the deeds of the 70 heavenly shepherds, who are in charge of the final period of history, among the seven archangels. It is likely that the author here thought of Michael, because in 90:14 the same figure appears as a supporter of the faithful Jews in the final struggle against their oppressors. This role is characteristic of Michael who is known as the archangel that fights for Israel (see below). On this identification, see Black, Book 271.277; Davidson, Angels 109-110; Tiller, Commentary 360.

22 Cf. 4Q403 and 4Q405.

23 Cf. Rev 1:20; 3:1; 4:5; 5:6; 8:2, 6; 2 En 19.

24 Cf. Tiller, Commentary 246.

25 Cf. Mach, Entwicklungsstadien 178.

26 On the meaning of the name Uriel, see e.g. Noth, Personennamen 168-169; Davidson, Angels 91, who does, however, prefer the translation "Light/Flame of God", which is also possible.

surprising that the "prince of light" (שר המאור) mentioned in 1QM XIII 10 (cf. 1QS III 20; CD V 18) has sometimes been identified with Uriel.[27] However, the characteristics of this figure make it more likely that we are dealing here with Michael.[28]

Early reception history draws mainly on Uriel's connection with the imprisonment of the watchers. In the Greek translation of 1En 9-10 where Uriel has replaced Sariel, he joins the intercession of the archangels (ch. 9) and instructs Noah (10:1-3). According to the Sibylline Oracles (2:227-237) he opens the doors of Hades and leads its inhabitants to the place of the final judgment. The passage evidently elaborates on the motif that Uriel is in charge over Tartarus and applies it to an eschatological setting which is missing in 1En 19; 21. Yet, this characterization of Uriel finds a certain parallel in the Ethiopic translation of 1En 27:2-4 where it is no longer Sariel, but Uriel who shows Enoch the cursed valley in which the souls of the sinners will be gathered at the last times.

The second archangel mentioned in 1En 20 is Raphael "who is in charge of the spirits of men" (20:3). This characterization refers to 1En 22:3, 6 where it is Raphael who shows Enoch the caves into which the souls of the dead are gathered.[29] Evidently, in these passages the name Raphael was brought into connection with the רפאים, the shades of the dead (cf. e.g. Isa 14:9), whereas it was usually interpreted as "God has healed" (רפא אל).[30] Thus, according to 1En 40:9 Raphael "is set over all the diseases and all the wounds of the children of men," and it is as an angel of healing that Raphael appears in the Book of Tobit (12:14-15).

Being counted among the four archangels, Raphael (with Michael, Gabriel and Sariel) is one of the heavenly opponents against the fallen watchers. However, he is not only commissioned to heal the wounds inflicted by their doings (1En 10:7), but also joins the intercessions of the archangels (1En 9) and is given the task of imprisoning the rebel angel Asael (1En 10:4-5). Finally, Raphael is commanded to write down all the sins of Asael (10:8), obviously to keep account of his deeds for the Day of Judgment (cf. 1En 89:59-64).

It is apparent that the individual profile of Raphael becomes somewhat blurred when he is acting as one of the four archangels. Apart from 1En 10:7 where he exacts his healing powers, the other actions reported of Raphael are no longer specifically connected with the attributes of this particular archangel, which have been sketched above. Yet, while according to 1En 10 the four archangels play at least differ-

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27   Cf. Ginzberg, Sekte 35-37; Wernberg-Møller, Manual 71, n. 60.
28   See below.
29   1En 22:3, 6 are partly attested by 4QEnᵍ Fr. 1 XXII.
30   Cf. Noth, Personennamen 179; Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1 295.

ent parts in the punishing of the fallen angels, the War Scroll presents them only as a collective opposing Israel's enemies. Here, Raphael appears again together with the same three archangels (1QM IX 15-16), and each of their names is to be written on the shields (מגנים) attached to one of the four towers (מגדלות). The idea in the background of this scene is that the four archangels participate in the eschatological battle as Israel's defenders (cf. 1QM XII 8).[31]

While Raphael, together with Michael and Gabriel, belongs to the three prominent archangels, whose names are not missing in any of the early extant lists, Raguel, the third archangel mentioned in 1En 20, is less famous. The Greek form of his name (Ῥαγουήλ) seems to go back to an original Aramaic רעואל[32] ("shepherd of God" or "friend of God").[33] According to 1En 20:4 Raguel "takes vengeance on the world of the luminaries," i.e. he punishes the transgressing stars (cf. 1En 18:13-16; 21:3-6). At first glance, 1En 23:4, the only other verse in 1En that mentions Raguel, seems to be consistent with this description of the archangel who here shows Enoch a relentless river of fire "which pursues all the luminaries of heaven." Yet, in the overall context of 23:1-4, the passage does not appear to deal with punishment, but rather expresses the idea of a fiery river "that provides fire for the luminaries as they set in the west" or of "a driving force to move them around to the beginning of their trajectories."[34]

It has, therefore, been suggested that, instead of ἐκδιώκω ("to pursue"), the text originally had a form of ἐκδικέω ("to take vengeance"), thus exactly complying with 1En 20:4. This theory is further corroborated by the fact that "all the other visions in chs. 21-27 center on some aspect of the final judgment or its anticipation."[35] Moreover, the imagery of the burning mountains which concludes the narrative unit in 23:1-24:1 also occurs in 18:13; 21:3 where it expresses the punishment of the transgressing stars. It is, however, noteworthy that the latter passages do only refer to seven stars, while according to 23:4 the punishment affects *all* the luminaries of heaven. Although there is a clear incongruity with the afore-mentioned verses, 1En 23:4 is consistent with

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31 Cf. Yadin, Scroll 237. On the concept of the four towers, see Carmignac, Règle 131-137.

32 Although the Aramaic form of the name is not attested in the Qumran fragments of 1 Enoch, there exists a striking parallel with the person Raguel (mentioned frequently in Tobit 6-10) whose original Aramaic name רעואל is confirmed by 4Q197 Fr. 4; cf. Charles, Version 53; Milik, Books 219; Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1 311.

33 Cf. Black, Book 162; Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1 311.

34 Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1 310-311.

35 Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1 311.

the characterization of Raguel given in 20:4 ("who takes vengeance on *the world* of the luminaries").

Whether the author assumed that, in fact, all luminaries had sinned and therefore deserved punishment, or whether he only meant to refer to all *transgressing* luminaries, remains an open question. Yet, it seems quite safe to conclude that originally it was Raguel's task to take vengeance on the luminaries, and that only later 1En 23:4 achieved its present form which now describes the stream of fire as *pursuing* (ἐκδιώκω) the stars. This modification has not necessarily been caused by a scribal error, but may as well be the result of an intentional change by the hand of a redactor, who may have found the reference to the punishment of all luminaries problematic and therefore changed the passage to a description of an astronomical phenomenon. In any case, there is no clear connection between the name of Raguel, the "friend/shepherd of God", and his role as avenger (or pursuer) of the luminaries.[36]

Michael, the fourth of the seven archangels mentioned in 1En 20, has become known as the patron of Israel. A similar role is already attributed to him in 1En 20:5 saying that he has been "put in charge of the good ones of the people (i.e. of Israel)." Although the readings of the Greek and Ethiopic manuscripts differ considerably, this translation most likely reflects the original reading, insofar as 1En 25:4-5 also associates Michael with the righteous ones (cf. 10:16-18).[37] In the Book of Daniel, Michael is not only responsible for the elect: as "the great prince, the guardian of [Daniel's] people" (12:1), he is fighting the angelic princes of Persia and Greece (Dan 10:13, 21), and he will arise at the time of the greatest distress, prior to the delivery of those "whose name is written in the Book" (12:1).[38]

Aspects from both 1En and the Book of Daniel return in the War Scroll where Michael opposes the "Prince of Iniquity" (i.e. Belial) and stands up for Israel (1QM XVII 5-8). As the "Prince of Light" (שׂר

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36 Milik, Books 219-220, suggests that the Greek verb ἐκδιώκω in 1En 23:4 is the translation of the Aramaic רדף which he takes to mean "to follow the flock," and he herein finds a link to the shepherd-function of Raguel. Still, this suggestion is hardly convincing as it is based on connotations of the verb רדף that are only known from Safaitic; cf. Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1 311. A different interpretation is offered by Charles, Version 61, who understands ἐκδιώκω as the rendering of the Aramaic רעע, which might be the corrupt reading of an original רעה ("feeds" / "nourishes"). This explanation is also highly speculative and can not prove a connection with the name רעואל.

37 Cf. Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1 294-295; see, however, Black, Book 163, according to whom Michael is set "over the benefits" of Israel.

38 Cf. also 1En 90:14 where the angelic scribe that supports Judas Maccabaeus and his fraction is most likely Michael (see above, n. 21).

(המאור)[39] he is set over "all sons of righteousness and spirits of truth" (1QM XIII 10), thus being especially connected with the fraction of the righteous, which consists of both humans and heavenly beings. One may, in fact, assume that the War Scroll already uses the term 'Israel' as a designation of the righteous, which no longer includes the rest of the people. The front line rather runs between the sons of light and the sons of darkness, the former belonging to the lot of God (and his archangel Michael),[40] while the latter are part of the lot of Belial and include not only the nations, but also those that break the covenant (1QM I 1-7). Consequently, the name of Michael, written on the shields of one of the four towers, provides the assistance of this angel in the final battle (1QM IX 15-16). It must, however, not be overlooked that in this passage Michael is but one of the four archangels and is not explicitly connected with a specific rank or function.[41]

Together with the same three archangels (Raphael, Sariel and Gabriel), Michael beseeches God to take action with regard to the defilement caused by the fallen watchers (1En 9).[42] He then takes part in their punishment by imprisoning Shemihazah and his associates as well as destroying their breed (1En 10:11-15), and finally renovates the earth (10:16-11:2). While in these passages Michael simply acts as "one of the chief princes" (אחד השרים הראשנים), as Dan 10:13 calls him, 1En 24:6 explicitly designates him as the leader of the archangels.[43] This idea of Michael's supremacy, which becomes dominant in later literature,[44]

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39 That the "Prince of Light" is indeed Michael and not Uriel becomes clear against the background of his close connection with Israel and the parallel in 1QM XVII 6 which speaks of "the reign of Michael in the eternal light". On this identification, see also Yadin, Scroll 235-236; Carmignac, Règle 136; Davidson, Angels 147-149.

40 Cf. Davidson, Angels 219,224-226.

41 A combination of the motifs known from 1QM returns in Rev 12:7 where Michael and his angels fight the dragon and the heavenly beings following him. The idea that Michael opposes Satan can also be expressed with regard to certain episodes of the biblical history (cf. Jude 9; L.A.E. 13-14).

42 Related to this motif is the idea that Michael acts as a mediator who intercedes for Israel. Cf. 1En 89-90 where the angelic scribe, most likely Michael, repeatedly informs God of the wicked deeds that the shepherd angels have committed against Israel; see also Test Levi 5:6-7; Test Dan 6:1-5.

43 It should, however, be noted that the early lists of four archangels always mention Michael first (1En 9:1; 40:9-10; 54:6; 71:8-9, 13; 1QM IX 15), hereby possibly reflecting the idea of his supremacy over the other archangels. See also the list of the seven archangels (1En 20) where Michael is not mentioned first but fourth, thus marking the centre.

44 Cf. T Isa 1:6; Mart Isa 3:15-16; 3 En 17:3; Hebr. T. Naph. 8-9. The combination of the idea of Michael's supremacy with his military functions has led to his designation as ἀρχιστρατηγός (2 En 22:6; 33:10; 72:5; Gk Apoc Ezra 4:24; cf. already Dan 8:11 LXX

has been construed in a remarkable way in 1QM XVII 7-8. According to this passage, Michael will be exalted above the heavenly beings (אלים) in correspondence to the growing of Israel's hegemony over the nations.[45] Thus, the War Scroll connects the motif of a special relationship between Michael and Israel to the idea that the angelic and the human world are closely linked with one another.[46]

As the supreme heavenly being, Michael can even be described in terms that were once exclusively reserved for God himself. The terminology used to express the idea of Michael's dominion over all other heavenly beings (1QM XVII 7: להרים באלים משרת מיכאל) is reminiscent of the Psalms where it is YHWH who is raised above the assembly of the divine.[47] The same phenomenon occurs in 11Q13 II 10 where Ps 82:1 is explicitly interpreted as a reference to Melchizedek[48] who here functions as the main protagonist in a struggle similar to that envisaged in 1QM. Therefore, it has been suggested that both, Michael and Melchizedek, are but different names for one and the same supreme angel.[49] Traces of the deification of Michael are also found in 1En 40:9. Introduced as "the merciful and long-suffering," Michael is again connected with attributes that were originally characteristic of God alone.[50] Thus, in its later development, the figure of Michael claims such a high status that one is almost tempted to answer the question implied by the name מיכאל („who is like God?")[51] by pointing to this very archangel.

The fifth archangel mentioned in 1En 20 is Sariel. Due to textual problems, the task ascribed to him in 20:6 is not entirely clear. However, with regard to 1En 27:2 where Sariel appears again,[52] it seems

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where the same term occurs, although it is not clear, whether it is applied to Michael). Note, however, that Gk Apoc Ezra 1:4 calls Raphael ἀρχιστρατηγός.

45 Cf. Davidson, Angels 202-203.

46 On this belief in the connection between both spheres, which was crucial to the Qumran community, see e.g. Mach, Entwicklungsstadien 209-255.

47 Cf. e.g. Ps 29:1; 82:1; 89:7.

48 Cf. Berner, Jahre 435; VanderKam, Chronologies 174.

49 Cf. e.g. van der Woude, Melchisedek 369-372. See, however, Davidson, Angels 263, who correctly points out that, at the respective time, there were apparently "various beliefs about the name of the leading angel".

50 Cf. e.g. Ps 103:8; 111:4; 145:8.

51 It has been suggested that the figure of Michael is in fact no other than the depotentialized Canaanite deity Mikal which was transformed into a supreme angel to comply with the hegemony of YHWH; cf. e.g. Hengel, Judentum 344-345. This hypothesis is not impossible, but can hardly be proved, the more so, as Michael is already attested as a personal name in the OT (cf. e.g. Num 13:13).

52 Although the Greek text of 1En 27:2 mentions Uriel, it is likely to assume that this name – as in chs. 9-10 – has replaced the original reading Sariel. Otherwise, Uriel would have appeared twice during Enoch's heavenly jorney (in chs. 21 and 27),

most likely that the angel was introduced as the one "who is in charge of the spirits who sin against the spirit."[53] Sariel would thus be the archangel responsible for the spirits of those who have spoken blasphemy and are, as a result, gathered in the cursed valley (27:2). That "the name Sariel, 'God is my prince,' *may* imply an acclamation of God in answer to such blasphemy,"[54] is an interesting observation, which nevertheless does not explain satisfactorily why this particular angel was entrusted with supervising the punishing place of the blasphemers.

Little more can be learned about the functions of Sariel, although he must have once played no marginal role, being counted among the four archangels of 1En 9-10 and only later replaced by Uriel. According to 1En 10:1-3, Sariel reveals to Noah the coming of the Flood and instructs him on the measures that are to be taken in order to survive imminent destruction. The scene finds a clear parallel in the Animal Apocalypse, and it is therefore likely to assume that the anonymous archangel who teaches Noah a secret (1En 89:1) is to be identified with Sariel.[55] In the Qumranic writings Sariel appears only once, as one of the four archangels whose names are to be written on the shields attached to the four towers in order to provide angelic support in the final battle (1QM IX 15-16).

The sixth archangel mentioned in 1En 20 is Gabriel "who is in charge of paradise and the serpents and the cherubim" (20:7). This characterization finds its closest parallel in 1En 32:6 where Enoch beholds the tree of wisdom and is informed about its part in Adam's and Eve's expulsion from Paradise. Although the extant versions of the text name Raphael as Enoch's companion, the background of 20:7 suggests that 'Gabriel' was the original reading.[56] The idea that Gabriel's responsibility includes the serpents and the cherubim implies that the archangel is also in charge of the guardians that are posted at the entrance of Para-

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while Sariel, although included in the introductory list of ch. 20, would have played no part at all; cf. Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1 319.

53   Cf. Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1 294-296. A different reconstruction of 1En 20:6 is offered by Black, Book 163, who assumes that Sariel is in charge of the spirits that cause apostasy. It does, however, not accord with 1En 27:2.

54   Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1 319.

55   Cf. Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1 375; Tiller, Commentary 258-259.

56   This also becomes clear when one recalls the structure of 1En 20: while Raphael, who is mentioned second, already accompanies Enoch to the Mountain of the Dead (ch. 22), Gabriel would have his likely place after Sariel (cf. 20:6-7), that is after ch. 27; cf. Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1 321.

dise (Gen 3:24).[57] A different aspect of Gabriel is stressed in 1En 40:9 where he is envisaged as the archangel who is "set over all the powers" (δυνάμεις), that is, over the "astral and angelic [...] 'potentates'"[58] (cf. Test Levi 3:3).

Still another picture of Gabriel is drawn in the Book of Daniel. Gabriel here appears as the *angelus interpres* who explains to Daniel the meaning of his vision of the ram and he-goat (8:16-17) and reveals to him the true significance of Jeremiah's prophecy on the seventy years of exile (9:21).[59] Although the *angelus interpres* of Daniel's final vision (chs. 10-12) is not identified by name, it is most likely Gabriel again, whose appearance is here described in terms of Ezekiel's vision of the heavenly beings that escort the chariot (Dan 10:5-6; cf. Ezek 1).[60] Moreover, we learn that, together with Michael, the respective angel is engaged in wrestling with the patron angels of Persia and Greece (10:13, 20-21). It is this military function that allows the easiest connection with the name גבריאל ("God is my hero/warrior").[61]

A related aspect occurs in 1QM IX 15-16 where Gabriel is included among the four archangels who support the sons of light in their strife against the sons of darkness (see above). As a member of the same angelic group, Gabriel already puts an end to the defilement and wickedness caused by the fallen watchers (1En 9-10). Here, it is his special task to destroy the giants that were born by the mortal women who had forbidden intercourse with the watchers (10:9-10). It is, however, noteworthy that this passage is a doublet to 10:15 where similar measures are taken by Michael. One may, therefore, assume that Gabriel's mission against the breed of the watchers is possibly a later addition which served the purpose of "fill[ing] out the number of the archangels to a traditional four."[62]

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57 The serpents (δράκοντες) are most likely to be interpreted as the seraphim, "identified with the fiery sword of Gen 3:24" (Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1 296; cf. Black, Book 163; Mach, Entwicklungsstadien 264).

58 Black, Book 200.

59 As a revelatory angel, Gabriel also appears in Luke 1:19, 26 where he foretells the births of John the Baptist and Jesus.

60 Cf. Collins, Daniel 373-374. See, however, Charles, Commentary 258, who argues that the angel must be of higher rank than Gabriel, because he has a more powerful effect on Daniel. This argument is far from convincing, because it ignores the fact that Dan 8-12 were written by more than one author. Different descriptions of one and the same angelic being may therefore easily exist side by side.

61 On this rendering of the name Gabriel, see e.g. Fitzmyer, Gospel 328; Collins, Daniel 336. Alternatively, one could interpret it as "man of God" or "God has shown himself strong." On the latter option, see Noth, Personennamen 190.

62 Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1 223.

The last among the seven archangels mentioned in 1En 20 is Remiel "whom God has put in charge of them that rise" (20:8). As has already been noted, the respective verse is not only textually dubious, but also provides the only evidence for an angel of that name in 1 Enoch.[63] Yet, maybe the anonymous angel presenting the heavenly tablets in 81:1 is to be identified with Remiel. His description in 20:8 suggests that Remiel was connected with the resurrection of the dead, a connection that may involve a play on the root רום Hifil ("to lift up"), which is part of his name.[64] The particular function of Remiel might have been to lead the resurrected from the nether world "to the judgement seat of God."[65] The picture of Remiel that is drawn by 1En 20:8 is reminiscent of the angel Jeremiel in 4 Ezra 4:36 who tells the souls of the righteous about the preconditions of their resurrection. Possibly Remiel and Jeremiel are but different names for the same angelic figure.[66]

4. Conclusions

From the fourth century BCE onward there is a number of Jewish sources that deal either with groups of archangels or with some of their individual representatives. The respective texts already reflect a diversity of traditions that do not fit in one big picture, but rather exist side by side. Neither the overall number of archangels nor the names of those who were to be counted among this number was a settled issue, let alone the specific tasks attributed to each of them. Depending on the different literary contexts, these parameters may vary considerably, and it is evident that different angelic protagonists could be entrusted with almost identical tasks in order to reach a significant overall number of archangels.[67]

As it is virtually impossible to disentangle the different threads that constitute the multifaceted picture of the archangels in early Jewish writings, the historical development of the respective part of angelology cannot be reconstructed with certainty. Yet, it is clear that the archangels must at least have been of importance for the theology of certain Jewish circles from early Second Temple times onward. From what we

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63 See, however, 1Enᵃ 6:7 where a certain Ramael (4QEnᵃ Fr. 1 III 7: רעמא]ל) is mentioned as one of the chieftains of the rebel watcher Shemihazah.

64 Cf. Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1 296.

65 Black, Book 163.

66 Cf. Bousset / Greßmann, Religion 325; Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1 296. See, however, Stone, Fourth Ezra 97, who denies the identity of Remiel and Jeremiel.

67 See above with regard to the commissioning of Gabriel in 1En 10:9-10.

learn in 1En and the Book of Daniel, the archangels feature primarily as God's supreme agents in fighting the wicked throughout history and in revealing the mysteries of the world and the hidden course of history to the chosen ones. This is, however, only the perspective we gain from some select writings which reflect the sophisticated positions of theologians. Still a different matter are the beliefs and practices of the common people on which the literary sources discussed in this article remain silent.[68]

Abstract

The Book of Watchers (1En 6-36) contains two lists of archangels which only agree in counting Michael, Gabriel and Raphael among the supreme heavenly beings. The major difference between both lists lies in the overall number of archangels. While 1En 9-10 count four angelic princes (the three aforementioned angels and Sariel) who oppose the fallen watchers, 1En 20 gives the names of seven archangels (adding Uriel, Raguel, Sariel and Remiel to the group of the three) who accompany Enoch on his heavenly journey (1En 21-36). Both traditions have had a great impact upon reception history, which is already shown by their attestation in other Jewish sources of Second Temple times. The individual profile of a specific archangel is not always clear-cut and may become almost unrecognizable when the respective angel is acting as part of a group. However, there are certain characteristics (e.g. Michael's patronage over Israel and Raphael's healing powers) that are already dominant in the early Jewish sources and have remained so until today.

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68 Only beneath the surface of the texts one gets a glimpse of popular beliefs connected with some of the archangels. The most obvious example is Raphael, whose healing powers are hardly a mere theoretical concept, but most likely reflect the practice of appealing to this very angel in order to achieve healing (cf. also the scene in John 5:4). Still one step further is the (cultic) worship of certain angels, which is reflected by polemic statements (cf. e.g. Rev 19:10; Col 2:18); on this issue see Mach, Entwicklungsstadien, 291-300.

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Guardian Angels and Angelic National Patrons in Second Temple Judaism and Early Christianity

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The belief in "guardian angels," i.e., the idea that an angel or other type of lesser deity is assigned to an individual human to protect, guide and intercede on his or her behalf with greater deities or the Deity, enjoyed a long history in the ancient Near East and is attested in Sumerian, Akkadian, Babylonian and Hellenistic contexts. In ancient Israel or, at least in the Hebrew Bible, we encounter only a few hints, at best, for such a belief. This concept, as all forms of angelology, appears to have undergone something of a renaissance in the Judaism of the second temple period. Still, nonetheless, it is not widely attested in the various witnesses to second temple Judaism which have come down to us. Belief in individual guardian angels is present in Christianity from, at least, the Gospel of Matthew and by the time of the early Fathers and the Rabbis had become a staple of angelology in both Christianity and Judaism. On the other hand, the related concept that certain angels served as guardians or patrons of peoples or nations played a much greater role in the angelology of second temple Judaism. The roots of this idea are to be found in the Hebrew Bible, and it continues on into early Christianity and rabbinic Judaism.

In this brief overview, we can do no more than trace this dual evolution from its origins in the ancient Near East and Hellenistic cultures through ancient Israel to the Judaism of the turn of the eras and on into early Christianity and rabbinic Judaism. We will give particular attention to the two concepts in Jewish texts and traditions from the second temple period, and just after. A brief summary of Early Christian and rabbinic Jewish texts and traditions will conclude this essay.

1. Guardian Angels in the ancient *Umwelt*

1.1 Ancient Near East

In Mesopotamia, as early as the third millennium, but becoming more prominent in the second, there existed a widespread belief in personal gods and goddesses. In the words of one eminent researcher, "the personal god was, *ab ovo*, intimately connected and concerned with one's individual fortunes."[1] One's personal deity was, it would appear, always known. Any of the gods or goddesses, even the high cosmic powers such as Sîn, the god of the moon, Shamash, the sun god, and Nergal, the god of the underworld, could be identified with an individual's personal god, even if most often the role was filled by lesser deities. In some sense, the individual's deity dwelt within his or her physical body and if the personal god or goddess removed themselves, the individual would be open to the demons which cause disease. One's personal deity was also in some sense one's father or mother, who served as one's provider and protector, who intercede for one before the higher gods and to whom one owed honour and obedience.[2]

1.2 The Hellenistic World

In ancient Greek mythology, as recorded by Hesiod, when the first race of men, those of the golden age, died, they became "pure spirits (δαίμονες ἁγνοὶ) dwelling on the earth." These spirits "are kindly, delivering from harm," and serve as "guardians of mortal men (φύλακες θνητῶν ἀνθρώπων); for they roam everywhere over the earth, clothed in mist and keep watch on judgements and cruel deeds, [they are] givers of wealth; for this royal right also they received" (Hesiod, Works and Days 122-126). Although there is no consistent view of the *daimones* in ancient Greek literature, demons or *daimones* are invariably held to rank between gods and mortals and very often function as intermediaries between the gods and humanity.[3] And they are not infrequently viewed as guardians either of nations and peoples or of individuals.

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1   Jacobsen, Treasures 155.
2   See the helpful summary in Jacobsen, Treasures 147-164, esp. 155-160.
3   Cf. the discussion in Burke, Greek Religion 179-181.

Both of the latter positions can be found in Plato: *daimones* as protective deities set over nations (Politikos 271de; 274b; Timaeus 42de; Leges 713c-714b); as protectors of individuals (Phaedon 107d-108c; 113d; Res publica 617de; 620de; Leges 732c; 877a). This view of the *daimones* as guardians of individuals and nations passed into later Platonism including, as we shall see in a moment, the thought of Philo of Alexandria.

2. The Hebrew Bible

2.1 Guardian angels of Individuals

In the Hebrew Bible we encounter from time to time the general idea that angels in general (Ps. 91:11-12) or even the Angel of the LORD (Ps. 34:7) serve as defenders and protectors of humankind. Nonetheless, the idea that individual angels are assigned to individual humans as their guardians and protectors is rare – if ever attested. The one place where it just might be found is the Book of Job. A heavenly intercessor is alluded to by two of Job's interlocutors, Eliphaz the Temanite in 5:1 and by Elihu in 33:23-26. Job himself three times appeals to such a heavenly intercessor (9:33; 16:19-21; 19:25). Interestingly, Job twice affirms his belief in such a being (16:19-21; 19:25) and once expresses doubt (9:33).[4] His skepticism on this last instance, however, is in reality a rejection of the idea that any heavenly being could possess the authority to actually serve as an "umpire" between God and humanity; an intercessor as in 16:19-21 or 33:23-26 could be accepted, an umpire is out of the question. Of all these texts from the Book of Job, it is behind 9:33 that Mesopotamian ideas concerning personal gods are the most probable. In the words of one commentator

> In ancient Sumerian theology each man had a personal god who acted as his advocate in the council of the gods who were too busy to give much attention to individual cases. This idea may be in the background of Job's thought, but he rejects it as unreal or unsatisfactory.[5]

This is not to say that Mesopotamian theology does not stand behind the other passages as well. It is to say that when the heavenly interces-

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4   The MT reads ... לֹא יֵשׁ־בֵּינֵינוּ מוֹכִיחַ ("There is no umpire between us,..."), but some Hebrew Mss have instead לוּ יֵשׁ־בֵּינֵינוֹ מוֹכִיחַ ("Would that there was an umpire between us,...") and this reading is presupposed by the LXX and the Peshitta. Both readings express doubt in the existence of an heavenly umpire.

5   Pope, Job 76.

sors had been downgraded from an "umpire" to a "mediator" they were more acceptable to Hebrew theology and the Mesopotamian thought, consequently, receded further into the background.

It needs to be said that it is certainly very possible, if not probable, that this ancient near eastern background once resided not only in the background of the Hebrew text but also on the surface. In other words, it is possible that a belief in guardian deities once played a much more significant role in ancient Israel than the Massoretic Text of the Hebrew Bible would lead one to believe. It is clear that belief in monotheism grew and developed, that Israelite religion was not monotheistic at its beginnings and that many passages in the Hebrew Bible presuppose belief in other (lesser?) deities (e.g., Pss 82; 89:1-9; Deut 32:8-9, 43; etc.). Robert Murray, following a suggestion of R. Serra's and M. Dahood's, has cogently argued that the Hebrew root עיר means "to protect," that it in turn is related to the Aramaic עיר (Dan. 4:10, 14, 20), usually rendered "Watcher," but should be understood as "Guardian," and that in a number of places, and by a variety of means, such guardian deities have been concealed in the text of the Hebrew Bible.[6] Murray suggests, for example, that "the blind and lame" (העורים והפסחים) of 2Sam 5:6 originally referred to "the guardians and protectors," העֹרים ("the guardians") being transformed by the addition of a *waw* into העורים ("the blind") and פסח being pointed differently so as to remove the reference to "protectors" (cf. Isa 31:5). According to Murray, a similar slight of hand may have occurred at Isa 33:23; 63:9; Lam. 4:14; and Job 19:25-27. If Murray is right, and I think he has made a strong case, it nonetheless seems that as monotheistic convictions grew and became entrenched, belief in such guardian deities was at first rejected entirely, at least officially, and only later during the second temple period re-introduced in the form of guardian angels.

2.2 Guardians of the Nations

Before we turn to the evidence of second temple Judaism, the parallel phenomenon of angelic guardian or patrons of the nations demands our attention. While guardian deities of individuals may, or may not, have been concealed or otherwise removed from the text of the Hebrew

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6   Murray, Origin.

Bible, there is no doubt concerning one instance concerning the heavenly guardians of the nations. In Deut 32:8-9, according to the Massoretic Text, when the Most High divided humankind into nations, "he fixed the boundaries of the peoples according to the number of the sons of Israel" (למספר בני ישׂראל), but he kept Israel as his own inheritance. The LXX in the main agrees but asserts that the Most High divided the nations "according to the number of *the angels of God*" (κατὰ ἀριθμὸν ἀγγέλων θεοῦ). It is now clear that the LXX translators must have had before them something like למספר בני אל ("according to the number of the sons of God") or למספר בני אלים ("according to the number of the sons of the gods"), for a manuscript from Qumran, 4QDeutj, read one or the other – the fragment breaks off at the crucial point, just after the ל, so that we cannot be sure which. Moreover, one early papyrus of the LXX, 848 (c. 50 BC), agrees exactly with the former reading: "according to the number of *the sons of God*" (κατὰ ἀριθμὸν υἱῶν θεοῦ), while Targum Ps.-Jonathan also presupposes either בני אל or בני אלים. Something similar happens later in the same chapter at v.43, where both the LXX and another Qumran manuscript, 4QDeutq, agree in a significantly longer text which calls on the sons, i.e., the angels, of God, so the LXX, or the simply the gods, so 4QDeutq, to worship YHWH. It seems safe to conclude that the original text of the Song of Moses (Deut 32:1-43) affirmed a belief in heavenly guardians, whether lesser deities or angels, set over the nations as a kind of cosmic patron, although later editors sought to remove this.

The same idea, it would seem, is reflected elsewhere in the Book of Deuteronomy. In 29:25-26 Israel is warned not to worship and serve other gods, gods whom YHWH "had not allotted to" Israel. This implies that, had he so desired, YHWH *could* have allotted Israel to other, lesser deities as he had the gentile nations. In fact, earlier, at 4:19-20, this is explicitly stated: Israel is not to worship the host of heaven, the sun, moon and stars, for these "YHWH your God has allotted to all the peoples everywhere under heaven," but he has kept Israel has his own possession among the nations. Given the common assumption in the ancient world of the divinity of the heavenly bodies, it would appear that at least the author of Deuteronomy assumed that each of the nations had been assigned by YHWH, the only true God, an angel or

"god," to guide and protect it. The worship of such was even, it is implied, allowed the gentile nations. Israel, however, belonged to YHWH as his special possession among the nations.[7]

3. Second Temple Judaism

3.1 Guardians of the Nations

These angelic national guardians become much more prominent in the Judaism of the second temple period. Already in the decades prior to the crisis precipitated by the reforms introduced by Antiochus Epiphanes,[8] Jesus ben Sira includes in a passage mainly concerned with anthropology the observation that God "appointed a ruler for every nation, but Israel is the Lord's own portion" (Sir. 17:17).[9] This parallels exactly the original text of Deut 32.8-9. Interestingly, a couple of late Greek manuscripts, minuscules 70 and 248, make the reference at Sir. 17:17 more precise, adding at the beginning of this sentence the notice that "[f]or at the division of the nations of all the earth, he appointed a ruler..."[10] This should be probably regarded as a later gloss, but necessarily a particularly late one. Obviously, the purpose of the gloss was to make clear the legend to which allusion is being made. We know from a number of late sources the outline of that legend: When the LORD descended to the Tower of Babel (Gen 11:1-19), he took with him the seventy angels who perpetually stood before him. And at the Tower, he divided humankind into seventy languages and nations, one for each of the seventy angels and then dispersed humankind over the face of the earth, having appointed one of the seventy angels as their guardian. The guardianship of Israel, however, he kept as his own responsibility. The last detail either takes place immediately at Babel or later at Sinai. This legend, which we will term the Angelic Patron Legend, appears in Targum Ps.-Jon. at Gen 11:7-8 and at Deut 32:8-9, in the Hebrew *Testament of Naphtali* 8:4-10:2, and in *Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer* 24, none of which

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7   Cf. the interpretation of Mullen, Assembly 202-205.

8   The Wisdom of Ben Sira is usually dated to 190-175 BC. So, e.g., Schürer, History III.1.202; Hengel, Judaism 131; and Nickelsburg, Literature 64.

9   ἑκάστῳ ἔθνει κατέστησεν ἡγούμενον, καὶ μερὶς κυρίου Ισραηλ ἐστίν.

10   Ἐν γὰρ μερισμῷ τῶν ἐθνῶν τῆς γῆς πασῆς, κτλ.

can claim to be earlier than medieval times. Nonetheless, it is plausible to suppose that the legend itself is much earlier. In fact, a case can be made that it was already presumed by the author of *Jubilees*.

Two different passages suggest this. First, in its retelling of the Tower of Babel story (*Jub*. 10:22-23), God took the angels with him when he descended to see the Tower, but no mention is made of the number of angels, nor of the seventy languages. Second, in the narrative concerning the granting of the covenant of circumcision to Abra-

ham (15:11-34), the author first reveals that the two highest orders of angels, the angels of the Presence and the angels of holiness, also share in the covenant of circumcision, for they are created circumcised (15:27), and then affirms the same doctrine found in the original text of Deut 32:8-9 and Sir. 17:17: –

> But he [= YHWH] chose Israel to be his people. He sanctified them and gathered (them) from all mankind. For there were many nations and many peoples and all belong to him. He made spirits rule over all in order to lead them astray from following him. But over Israel he made no angel or spirit rule because he alone is their ruler. He will guard them and require them for himself from his angels, his spirits, and everyone, and all his powers so that he may guard them and bless them and so that they may be his and he theirs from now and forever (15:30b-32).[11]

Here the detail that certain spirits – a regular term for angels in *Jubilees* – were set over the nations *in order to lead them astray* is a new development, and one which is never fully explained or justified in the text of *Jubilees*. Elsewhere in *Jubilees* it is demons, the unclean offspring of the fallen Watchers, who lead humanity astray (cf. 10:1-9). The assumption of the Angelic Patron Legend would, however, explain it: The nations are to be led astray from following God because of their sin at the Tower of Babel. It would seem that the author of *Jubilees* was familiar with this legend and it has impacted to some degree his telling of the story of Babel. He, nonetheless, moved the legend's "punch line" about Israel being God's own possession from it's place at Babel, or Mt. Sinai, to the introduction of the covenant of circumcision, in keeping with his repeated assertion that the patriarchs already kept the Torah which was later revealed to Moses.[12] Even if the author of Jubilees' dependence on the full Angelic Patron Legend, as attested in Targum Ps.-Jon., *PRE* 24

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11   Translation cited from VanderKam (trs.), Jubilees.
12   A similar use and re-application of the legend appears in the *Ps.-Clementines* (Re-cognitiones II,42; Homiliae XVIII,4).

and *Test. Naph.* 8-10, is doubted, there is no doubt about his agreement with Deut 32:8-9 and Sir. 17:17, and his belief in the general concept of angelic guardians appointed over the nations.

In all probability, the *Book of Jubilees* dates from the Maccabean crisis.[13] Two other texts from the same tumultuous period also attest the belief that angelic guardians are set over the nations, the Book of Daniel and the Enochic *Animal Apocalypse*. In the former the angelic patrons of Persia (10:13, 20), of Greece (10:20) and of Israel (10:21, 12:1) are all mentioned. The fourth and final revelation (chaps. 10-12) opens with an extended introduction in which a description of the unnamed angel sent to Daniel is given in some detail (10:5-6). This angel, who should probably be identified with the archangel Gabriel,[14] informs Daniel that his mission was opposed by "the Prince of the Kingdom of Persia" (שׂר מלכות פרס). Michael, one of the chief princes (אחד השׂרים הראשׁנים), came to the unnamed angel's (or Gabriel's) aid and allowed him to complete his mission of revelation to Daniel (10:12-14). He informs Daniel that when he has completed his mission, he will return to fight against the Prince of Persia and, after him, the Prince of Greece (10:20). In the apocalyptic assumption that earthly realities reflect and mirror heavenly ones, the princes of Persia and Greece, that is, their angelic patrons, oppose the archangels who stand up for Israel. And their order, Persia followed by Greece, parallels the events of terrestrial history: The dominion of the Persian Empire was brought to an end by Alexander the Great and his successors (cf. Dan. 8). Here is the same basic concept of Deut 32:8-9; Sir. 17:17 and *Jub.* 15:31-32, with the one significant development that now Israel also has an angelic patron: Michael (10:21; cf. also 12:1). We will return to this development momentarily.

First, however, we must examine the other Maccabean era text, the *Animal Apocalypse*. This symbolic retelling of the history of Israel, in which humans are represented by various species of animals and heavenly beings are represented as humans, extends from the creation of Adam through to the Maccabean crisis from which issues the end of the present age and the inauguration of the age to come. The patriarchs and Israel are invariably represented by *kosher* animals (e.g., sheep, bulls, cattle, etc.) and Gentile nations by wild beasts and various spe-

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13 Cf. e.g., VanderKam, Studies 214-285; Nickelsburg, Literature 78-79; Schürer, History, III.1.311-313.

14 Gabriel was the angel of revelation in the two previous visions (8:16; 9:21) and the activity ascribed to this figure (11:1) corresponds to the date of Gabriel's activity (9:1-3, 21-23). So also Collins, Daniel 373, 376.

cies of unclean animals. The author presents the period extending from the Babylonian captivity to the Maccabean triumph as a period in which the Lord of the Sheep (i.e., God) hands over the sheep (i.e., Israel) to the oversight of seventy Shepherds, that is, to seventy angels, which, of course, recalls the seventy angels of the Angelic Patron Legend. This period covers the Babylonian captivity (*1En.* 89:55-71), the limited restoration under Zerubbabel and Joshua (89:72-77), the Persian and Hellenistic hegemonies (90:1-7), and especially the crisis under the Seleucids which resulted in the Maccabean revolt (90:6-19). The seventy Shepherds, it would seem, represent the angelic patrons of the Gentile nations who oppress Israel during this period of some four centuries; in turning Israel over to the nations, God in effect turns them over to the nations' heavenly patrons. At the beginning of this period the Lord of the Sheep gives strict instructions to the Shepherds for their period of oversight: the order the Shepherds are to replace one another as Israel's "guardian," who among the sheep is to be punished and who killed. However, the Lord of the Sheep also appoints a certain angelic scribe to audit the activity of the Shepherds, because the Lord of the Sheep knows that the Shepherds will exceed their commission and kill more of the sheep than he had intended (89:59-64). As the narrative proceeds there are a number of clues that this angelic figure is probably to be identified with none other than the archangel Michael.[15] However, that maybe, it is often noted that the event alluded to in *1En.* 90:13-14 is probably the same as that recorded in 2Macc 11:6-11, in which an angel comes to the aid of Judas Maccabeus and his forces.[16] We will return to Michael in a moment. It needs first to be noted that the author of the *Animal Apocalypse* has taken the concept of the angelic guardians of the nations and stood it on its head, so to speak. Here the angelic patrons function not so much as guardians of the Gentile nations, although they are that to be sure, nor even as angels charged with leading the Gentiles astray, as in *Jubilees*. Rather, they function as a means of punishing Israel. Israel who has been under the protection of the Lord of the Sheep throughout its history was, at the exile, handed over to the nations. Here again we encounter the apocalyptic notion that earthly realities mirror and reflect heavenly ones.

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15 At 90:22 this figure is identified as one of the seven white men, who represent the seven archangels, one of whom is clearly Michael (cf. *1En.* 87:2-89.1 with *1En.* 9-10). Moreover, at 90:13-14 this figure parallels the actions of Michael in Dan. 10:21 and esp. 12:1. So also, e.g., Charles, Enoch 201, 211; Uhlig, Henochbuch 694, 699. The identification is questioned by Tiller, Apocalypse 326.

16 Cf. Charles, Enoch 211; Tillar, Apoaclypse 360-361.

3.2 Michael as Guardian of Israel

As already intimated, although there was a widespread view among the Jews that Israel, as a special possession of God Himself, had not been appointed an angelic guardian, this was not the only view current in the second temple period. Indeed, it would appear that it was becoming increasingly common to assert that the archangel Michael served as Israel's heavenly patron. As we have already seen, the unnamed angel (probably Gabriel) who appears to Daniel refers to Michael as "your (plu.) Prince" (שרכם 10:21). In addition, according to Daniel the eschatological crisis will culminate with the appearance of "Michael, the great Prince, the protector of your people" (lit. "Michael, the great Prince, the one who stands over the sons of your people"; מיכאל השר הגדול העמד על בני עמך 12:1). Again, as mentioned above, there is good reason to suppose that the angelic scribe who records the actions of the seventy Shepherds in the *Animal Apocalypse* is Michael. This becomes especially clear at *1En.* 90:13-14 when this angelic figure takes up battle for the Maccabeans against the Seleucids, paralleling the actions of Michael in Daniel (10:21; 12:1). It is integral to the narrative strategy of the *Animal Apocalypse* that individuals, human or angelic, are never named. Other texts also mention an angelic patron set over Israel without naming him. These include the *Testament of Moses* (10:1), 2Maccabees (3:24-28; 10:29-30; 11:6-11; 15:20-27; cf. also 3 Macc. 6:18-19), and the *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs* (*TLevi* 5:1-6; *TDan.* 6:2-7). While it is not certain that these allude to Michael, such a supposition is not at all improbable. Two further texts, however, explicitly relate Michael to Israel. In *1 Enoch*'s list of archangels (*1En.* 20:5), Michael is set over "the good ones of the people" (τοῦ λαοῦ).[17] The nation of Israel is often referred to in the Septuagint as "the people" (ὁ λαός). And in the *War Scroll* Michael's position over "the gods" (i.e., the angels) parallels Israel's over "all flesh" (1QM xvii.6-8a).[18] Indeed, commentators gener-

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17 The Greek manuscript repeats the whole of 19:3-21:9 and so has this passage twice, first as Μιχαήλ ὁ εἷς τῶν ἁγίων ἀγγέλων ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν τοῦ λαοῦ ἀγαθῶν τεταγμένος καὶ ἐπὶ τῷ χάῳ, and then as Μιχαήλ ὁ εἷς τῶν ἁγίων ἀγγέλων ὃς ἐπὶ τῶν τοῦ λαοῦ ἀγαθῶν τέτακται καὶ ἐπὶ τῷ χάῳ. Both of which can be translated as "Michael, one of the holy angels who is set over the good ones of the people and over chaos." The final phrase, however, is odd and conflicts with *1En.* 20:2, according to which Uriel is set over "Tartarus." The reading of the Ethiopic, "Michael, one of the holy angels, for he has been put in charge of the good ones of humankind, in charge of the people," suggest that we may have here to do with a doublet which entered the textual tradition early and that the final phrase, in both the Greek and Ethiopic, should simply be omitted.

18 "He (i.e., God) sends everlasting aid to the lot of his covenant by the power of the majestic angel for the sway of Michael in everlasting light, to illumine with joy the

ally agree that Michael is none other than the Prince of Lights or Angel of His truth whom the Qumran community regarded as their special patron (1QS iii.13-iv.1).[19] Since the covenanters of Qumran regarded themselves as the remnant of the people of Israel, it is not surprising that they also regarded the archangel set over the nation as their own heavenly protector and guardian.

3.3 Guardian Angels of Individuals

Belief in guardian angels appointed to individuals is attested somewhat less frequently in the Judaism of the second temple period. It would, however, be a mistake to conclude that it enjoyed less importance in the eyes of most Jews. By its very nature, it falls into the category of private piety rather than public religion and thus is bound to appear in public texts much less frequently. It is, nonetheless, to be found, in early texts, such as the books of Tobit and *Jubilees*, later in Philo of Alexandria and still later in two texts from the first half of the second century: Ps.-Philo's *Liber Aniquitatum Biblicarum* and *3 Baruch*.

In the Book of Tobit, which is usually thought to date from the sometime between 225 BC and 175 BC,[20] the archangel Raphael functions as the guardian of Tobiah, Tobit's son. He guides and guards him on his journey to Media (chaps. 5-11), instructs him on how to protect himself and free his bride, Sarah, from the demon Asmodeus and on how to cure his father's blindness (6:5-9, 17-18; 11:7-8). To be sure, throughout most of the tale one has the impression that Raphael is not a guardian angel in the usual sense of an angel who has been assigned to Tobiah from his birth and will accompany him throughout his life. Rather, Raphael's mission has all the hallmarks of an occasional assignment in response to Tobit's and Sarah's prayers (3:16-17). After all, Raphael is one of the seven archangels who stand in the presence of God himself (12:15). However, when Raphael reveals his identity to Tobit and Tobiah at the story's end, he divulges that he has had more than a passing interest in Tobit and Tobiah, he has delivered their

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covenant of Israel, peace and blessing to God's lot, to exalt the sway of Michael above all the gods, and the dominion of Israel over all flesh" (ישלח עזר עולמים לגורל [ב]ריתו בגבורת מלאך האדיר למשרת מיכאל באור עולמים להאיר בשמחה ברית ישראל שלום וברכה לגורל אל להרים משרת מיכאל בשמחת איל(ם ישראל שלום וברכה לגורל אל להרים משרת מיכאל באילם שלום וברכה לגורל אל להרים משרת מיכאל באילם לממשלת ישראל בכול בשר). Text and translation from García Martínez / Tigchelaar, Dead Sea I.140-141.

19   For discussion and bibliography see, Hannah, Michael 64-75.

20   So Fitzmyer, Tobit 50-52.

prayers to God, witnessed Tobit's acts of piety and even tested Tobit with blindness (12:12-14). It would seem, then, that Raphael had indeed been appointed as the guardian angel of Tobit, Tobiah and even Sarah long before the events recorded in the Book of Tobit. Given this lack of clarity, it is possible that the Book of Tobit attests a rather undeveloped form of the belief in guardian angels of individuals, at least when compared to later works like *3 Baruch* and *LAB*. Nonetheless, it demonstrates that the concept was not unknown in Judaism, well before these second century texts.

A similar situation may be reflected in the *Book of Jubilees*. In a passage which has no parallel in Genesis, Rebecca, before her death, shares her fears with Isaac that after they are no more, Easu will take his revenge on Jacob. Isaac remains confident of Jacob's safety, for even

> if [Easu] wishes to kill his brother Jacob, he will be handed over to Jacob and will not escape from his control but will fall into his control. Now you are not to be afraid for Jacob, because Jacob's guardian is greater and more powerful, glorious, and praiseworthy than Esau's guardian" (35:16-17).

R. H. Charles regarded this as "the earliest distinct reference to [the] belief" in "the idea of men's guardian angels."[21] If Tobit is discounted, Charles may well be right with regard to guardian angels of individuals in Jewish literature (which was doubtless his intention). Again, as with Tobit, we encounter here no confession of a belief that humans, in general, possess heavenly guardians, as in Mesopotamian and Hellenistic literature, nor even that all faithful Jews have such protectors as seems implied in *LAB* and *3 Baruch*. It would be easy to take the guardians of *Jubilees* 35:17 as if they were unique to important figures in the life of the nation like Jacob and Easu. However that may be, it is striking that the author of *Jubilees*, for all his interest in angels of various classes, only mentions guardian angels this once.

As mentioned above, Philo of Alexandria, a Platonist and an interpreter of the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, could accommodate a belief in guardian angels. Philo's angelology is fundamentally derivative from Platonic demonology, but also draws in a more superficial way from Jewish traditions concerning angels.[22] One of the fundamental principles of Philo's angelology is the conviction that angels serve God as ministers on behalf of humanity (*Somn.* I,141-142; *LA* III,177-178; *Gig.* 12). Philo is usually very general in his comments regarding this ministry on behalf of humanity: God employs angels "as ministers and helpers, to have charge and care of mortal man" (*Gig.* 12),

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21   Charles, Jubilees 209, n. 17.
22   Cf. Dillon, Philo's Doctrine and Hannah, Michael 76-90.

as agents of healing (*LA* III,177-178), and as messengers and mediators (*Somn.* I,141-142). On one occasion, however, Philo makes it clear that individual angels also serve to as guardians of individuals, assigned at one's birth. A demon or evil angel is also assigned at one's birth (*QE* I,23). In other words, every individual is appointed two guardians at birth, one good, the other evil. This variation re-appears in early Christianity (Hermas, *Man.* VI,2) and rabbinic Judaism (*b.Shabb.* 119b). In Philo, then, we meet albeit briefly a clear belief in guardian angels of individuals. Does Philo owe this to his reading of Plato and other works of Hellenistic philosophy alone or had hints found in Tobit and *Jubilees* already developed within Judaism into the full blown concept? Certainly by Philo's time Judaism and Hellenism had been in contact for over three centuries and the former had been greatly influenced by the latter. Even if Philo's one reference to guardian angels of individuals, and his angelology generally, seems more Platonic than Biblical, it would be overly critical to suppose that Philo was the only Jew who adopted a belief in guardian angels, especially given the moves already made by Tobit and *Jubilees*.

By the first half of the second century of our era, the idea that individuals were assigned angelic guardians must have been widespread in Judaism. This belief is assumed in two very different documents, a re-telling of the history of Israel replete with midrashic traditions, Ps.-Philo's *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, and an apocalypse of the other worldly journey type, *3 Baruch*. The later is probably in origin a Jewish text, but in its present form has certainly been revised by Christians, among whom alone it has survived.[23] The Christian additions, however, are easily identified and do not concern us here. The text recounts a heavenly journey by the Old Testament scribe Baruch through the seven heavens led by an *angelus interpres*. In the fifth heaven Baruch witnesses the descent of Michael, presumably from the sixth or seventh heaven, to receive the prayers (so the Slavonic version) or the prayers, good deeds or virtues (so the Greek version) of humanity (*3Bar.* 11-16). The "angels who are in the service of men"[24] appear before Michael

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23 So, e.g., Harlow, Apocalypse 77-108; Hughes, 3 Baruch 528-530.The date of *3 Baruch* is uncertain, but as Origen (*Princ.* II,3.6) cites it, it must be earlier than AD 231. The heavenly cult described in chapts. 11-16 and the lack of concern for the temple of Jerusalem fits comfortably with the situation in Judaism after the two Jewish revolts when all hope in a restored Jerusalem temple had been completely abandoned.

24 So the Slavonic. The Greek version reads "the angels over the authorities" (ἄγγελοι ἐπὶ τῶν ἐξουσιῶν). Hughes (3 Baruch 540, n.), following Ryssel, supposed that ἐξουσιῶν was an error for δικαίων ("righteous"), but this was on the basis of, presumably inferior, witnesses to the Slavonic version. Better Slavonic manuscripts, followed by Gaylord

(12:3) to deliver the prayers (or prayers, good deeds and virtues). Three different groups of these angels approach Michael: Those whose bowls are full, those whose bowls are only half full and those whose bowls are empty. The first have been appointed to pious and virtuous individuals, the second serve men who are less dedicated but for whom there is hope, and the last to "evil men."[25] This last group begs to be released from their charges. Michael ascends, presumably to the seventh heaven, to offer the prayers (or prayers, good deeds and virtues) to God. After a time he returns and commands the first two groups of angels to deliver to their charges mercy (so the Slavonic) or oil (so the Greek), in due measure according to their deeds, prayers, virtues, etc. To the third group, he relates the divine command that they are not to leave those to whom they have been committed, but to bring God's punishment on them. Here, in a Jewish text, is a fully developed portrait of guardian angels, appointed apparently to every individual person, responsible for their protection, their growth in piety and retribution for their sins. The picture is one which will re-appear, in a very similar form, in a Christian context (cf. *Apoc.Paul*; see below).

The picture is nowhere so complete in Ps.-Philo,[26] but then the purpose of the author is completely different. Ps.-Philo only alludes to guardian angels on three occasions and does not attempt the kind of depiction which we find in *3Bar*. 11-16. At *LAB* 15:5, which records the apostasy occasioned by the report of the Twelve spies (Num. 13), it is related that:

> ...suddenly the glory of God appeared, and he said to Moses, "So, do the people continue not to listen to me at all? Behold now the plan of action that has issued from me will not be in vain. I will send the angel of my wrath upon them to afflict their bodies with fire in the wilderness. But I will command my angels who watch over them (*angelis meis qui custodiunt eos*) not to intercede for them; for their souls I will shut up in the chambers of darkness," [27]

It is implied that certain of the angels have been appointed to keep watch over or guard the Israelites and to intercede for them. Later, near the end of the work, in the account of Samuel anointing David king, the young David composes a hymn of praise, which includes "...because

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in his edition, speak not of "righteous men" but of "the service of men." In any case, the Greek does not agree with the context and should be regarded as corrupt.

25   So the Greek. The Slavonic reads "to places of demons and men," which cannot be correct.

26   For LAB's composition in the first half of the second century, see the very full discussion in Jacobson, Pseudo-Philo 199-210.

27   I cite the translation of Harrington, Pseudo-Philo.

God has protected me and because he has delivered me to his angels and to his guardians that they should guard me" (59:4). David, as King of Israel, is protected by a host of angels and guardians. And finally, Ps.-Philo's version of the Decalogue includes "You shall not be a false witness against your neighbour, speaking false testimony, lest your guardians speak false testimony against you" (11:12). Howard Jacobson objects that this is a nonsensical statement:

> LAB could not have written that as a punishment for your crimes, your guardian angels would testify falsely against you. It is one thing to say that they would fail to plead upon your behalf or would even testify against you (cf. 15:5), but quite another – and entirely unacceptable – to say that the angels would lie in their testimony against you. The text needs correction.[28]

Jacobson goes on to suggest that the original Hebrew, behind the Latin text, read שכניך ("your neighbour"), but this "was corrupted to – or confused for – שמריך" ("your guardian").[29] While this is not impossible, there are certain difficulties with this suggestion. First, the Hebrew term for neighbour in the Decalogue is not שכן, but רע (Exod. 20:16, 17; Deut 5:20, 21). Second, ־מר־ would not seem to be an obvious mistake for ־כנ־. Third, even Jacobson admits that guardian angels was a concept of some importance for Ps.-Philo. To be sure the text is difficult, but it does not necessarily follow that the text is corrupt. We *could* have here an example of hyperbole: "If you are a false witness, even those who cannot be false, your guardians, will turn against you." On the other hand, it maybe that the text originally warned that the guardians of those who give false witness will testify against them and "false" was added in error by a scribe who incorrectly understood the text – a scribal correction which could have occurred at the Hebrew, Greek or Latin stage of transmission. Either way, given Ps.-Philo's interest in guardian angels it is hazardous to read them out of this passage. If this is accepted, then we have in this, *LAB*'s first reference to guardian angels of individuals, a clear parallel to *3Bar*. 11-16: Guardian angels function not only to protect and intercede for the humans to whom they are assigned, but also to testify against them if their deeds are evil.

From all the above it would seem that a belief in guardian angels of individuals was common among Jews by the second century at the latest. While we cannot cite as many examples for it as we can for angelic guardians of nations, this does not mean that it was not as wide

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28 Jacobson, *Pseudo-Philo*, 475.
29 Jacobson, *Pseudo-Philo*, 476.

spread. Its character as an expression of popular religion can easily account for it relative paucity. The early Christian evidence, to which we now turn, serves to confirm this conclusion.[30]

4. Early Christianity

4.1 Guardians of the Nations

Christian authors from time to time briefly mention angelic guardians of the nations, often, but not always, with reference to Deut 32:8-9 LXX. For example, Clement of Alexandria, after asserting that "divine ministers" (τῶν θείων λειτουρφῶν) are one of God's particular means of instilling virtuous thoughts in righteous individuals, adds as an aside, "[f]or the patronage of angels is distributed over the nations and cities. And, perhaps, some (angels) are even assigned to individuals" (Stromata VI,17.157.5 [GCS 2,513]).[31] Hippolytus, in his *Contra Gaius*, appeals to Deut 32:8 in his defense of the Johannine Apocalypse. Gaius had apparently set various passages in the gospels and in Paul over against texts from the Revelation in order to challenge the canonicity and apostolicity of the latter. In contrast to Rev. 9:14-15, Gaius pointed out that Jesus had predicted that nation would rise against nation, not that angels would fight against humans as Revelation seems to imply. Hippolytus, with real insight into the apocalyptic method, however, asserted that the four angels which John mentions in Rev. 9:14-15 referred to the angelic guardians of nations – in his opinion, the angels over the Persians, Medes, Babylonians and Assyrians.[32] The influence of Deut 32:8-9 can also be detected in the *Ps.-Clementines* (Recognitiones II,42; Homiliae XVIII,4).

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30 One other text, from the *Epistle of Enoch*, should probably be mentioned, for the sake of completeness: "He will set a guard of the holy angels over all the righteous and holy; and they will be kept as the apple of the eye, until (Eth.: all) evil and (Eth.: all) sin come to an end" (*1En.* 100:5). However, the context makes clear that this concerns the post-mortem, intermediate state of the souls of the righteous and not their earthly existence.

31 Κατά τε γὰρ τὰ ἔθνη καὶ πόλεις νενέμηνται τῶν ἀγγέλων αἱ προστασίαι, τάχα δὲ καὶ ὧν ἐπὶ μέρους [ὧν] ἐνίοις ἀποτετάχαταί τινες.

   The word in the square brackets, ὧν, is not in the manuscripts but has been added by various editors. It has been suggested that ἀνθρώπων should be added instead of ὧν. This would be clearer but does not change the sense. The translation is my own.

32 This Hippolytan work of lost. Portions of it, however, are cited by the twelfth century Dionusius Bar Salibi in his commentary on the New Testament. See Gwynn, Hippolytus 402 and Achelis, *Hippolyt's*, 239-247.

As just intimated, Hippolytus was surely on the right track when he identified the four angels bound at the Euphrates river as four guardian angels of four eastern nations, for it is a move which accords with the important assumption of apocalypticism that earthly events and happenings mirror heavenly ones. Whether or not John of Patmos actually here intended angelic national guardians is another question, especially given the demonic nature of the forces which these four angels unleash (Rev. 9:16-19). [33] Nonetheless, it is all but certain that John was familiar with and accepted the concept of angelic guardians of the nations. For he clearly knew and was influenced by the Book of Daniel in general, and the portrait of Michael in Dan. 10:13, 20-21 and 12:1 has informed his depiction of Michael in Rev. 12:7 in particular. Moreover, the angels of the seven churches of Asia are probably best construed as a variation on this same theme.[34] The concept of certain angels appointed as national patrons is thus attested in a text from the end of the first century (Revelation), in an author from the end of the second (Clement), another from the beginning of the third (Hippolytus) and from two related fourth century works (the *Ps.-Clementines*).

4.2 Guardian Angels of Individuals

The notion that angels were assigned to individuals is also found in early Christianity, as the passage cited above from Clement of Alexandria illustrates. Clement was by no means the first Christian author to express such an opinion. The concept is to be found at least once in the New Testament, although other passages are often cited in support of the doctrine. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, for example, expresses the general idea, in a manner reminiscent of Philo (*Gig.* 12), that angels serve as ministers on behalf of humanity (1:14). This in itself need not imply guardian angels, but it is nevertheless a short step from this general assumption to the more specific conception of angels appointed to guide and protect individual humans. The variant reading at Luke 22:43 concerning the angel which appeared to Jesus on the Mount of Olives could be understood as his guardian,[35] as could the more than

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33 Aune, Revelation II.538 and Beale, Book 507, however, think it possible that guardians of the nations were intended by John.

34 This was an early interpretation, found in, e.g., Hippolytus, Antichristus LIX; Origen, De principiis I,8.1; In Lucam homiliae XXIII,7; Basil, Commentarii in Isaiam I,46, as well as in modern commentators, e.g., Caird, Revelation 24.

35 The passage is found in early witnesses from a variety of text-types: Western: D Ψ 0171 Lat Syrᶜ; Alexandrian: ℵ*,2 L Coptᴮᵒᵖᵗ; Caesarean: Θ f¹ and Eusebius and Byzantine: E F G H Q D*. It is also supported by the Syrᵖʰ and in the early Fathers Justin,

twelve legions of angels which the Matthean Jesus, at his arrest, claims the right to call on (Matt. 26:53). In addition, Luke may have viewed the angel who appeared to Paul before the shipwreck on Malta (Acts 27:23-24) to be Paul's guardian. On the other hand, all of these texts may only express the general idea that angels serve humanity, especially Christians and, above all, the Son of God himself.

The New Testament text which without question alludes to guardian angels of individuals is a dominical saying recorded only in the Gospel of Matthew (18:10). Between a group a sayings taken over from Mark (18:1-5 [par. Mark 9:33-37] and 18:6-9 [par. Mark 9:42-47]), and the parable of the Lost Sheep taken over from *Q* material (18:12-14 [par. Luke 15:3-7]), Matthew inserts this saying which serves to join the two blocks of material together:

> See to it that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I say to you that their angels in heaven always behold the Face of my Father who is in heaven.[36]

The phrase "one of these little ones" is also found in parallel statements in v.6 and 14, and links all the three statements. Given the fuller form in v.6, "one of these little ones who believe in me," it is clear that believers, not children, are in view. It is hard to resist the conclusion that in Matthew's mind all believers were assigned an angel who stood in the presence of God, for neither the statement in verse 6 nor the one in verse 14 is limited to a sub-set of Christian believers. These guardians angels are probably to be equated with the large number of angelic hosts who stand before God (Dan. 7:10; *1En*. 40:1), and not with the four (*1En*. 40:2) or seven archangels (Tobit 12:15; Luke 1:19; *Test. Abr*. 7:11; cf. also Rev. 8:2; 4Q400 1 i.3-4) who stand in his immediate presence. To be sure, the picture here differs from that in *3Bar*. 11-16. According to Matthew's Jesus, the guardian angels perpetually stand before God, apparently interceding for their charges, rather than traveling back and forth between earth and heaven. This difference, however, belongs to the manner in which the angels are thought to fulfill their task or, at least, the manner in which the task is depicted. The task itself remains the same.

  Irenaeus and Hippolytus. The passage is omitted by early and important witnesses, including P[75] ℵ[1] A B N T W 579 it[f] Syr[s] Copt[Sa,Bopt] and moved to after Matt. 26.39 by *f*[13] and manuscripts known to Jerome. The longer text is unlikely to have been original, but is clearly ancient.

36 Ὁρᾶτε μὴ καταφρονήσητε ἑνὸς τῶν μικρῶν τούτων· λέγω γὰρ ὑμῖν ὅτι οἱ ἄγγελοι αὐτῶν ἐν οὐρανοῖς διὰ παντὸς βλέπουσι τὸ πρόσωπον τοῦ πατρός μου τοῦ ἐν οὐρανοῖς. Under the influence of 18.6, the Western text (D it Vg[mss] Syr[c]) and some mss of the Sahidic Coptic include the addition τῶν πιστευότων εἰς ἐμέ after the initial phrase. This reading, while not original, captures Matthew's intention.

Another New Testament passage, which is often thought to refer to guardian angels is Acts 12:15. Peter after his nocturnal and miraculous escape from prison goes to the house in Jerusalem where the church is gathered together to pray for his release A servant girl, upon recognising his voice, neglects to let him in, but rushes into the house to inform the believers that the man they are praying for stands outside in the street. When she continues to insist, despite their incredulity, that it is so, they conclude that this must be his angel.[37] This is often taken to mean Peter's guardian angel[38] and a late rabbinic text (*GenR* 78:3) is appealed to which asserts that the angel with which Jacob wrestled (Gen 32:24-33) was none other than Esau's guardian, and that this explains Jacob's statement that to see Esau was like seeing the face of God (Gen 33:10). In other words, Esau's guardian looked like Esau; the two possessed the same appearance. However, in the story in Acts 12, Rhoda the servant girl does not see Peter's face, she merely hears his voice! It has recently been cogently argued that "angel" here refers to Peter himself in his intermediate state, i.e., Peter's post-mortem soul or spirit.[39] The frequent comparison of post-mortem existence with angelic existence (*1En*. 39:5; 45:4-5; 51:4; 54:1-2; 104:4; *2Bar*. 51:1-12; Mark 12:25 pars.) means that this explanation demands, at the very least, consideration. It is, I believe, confirmed when coupled with Acts 23:8-9. Given that the Sadducees, accepted the authority of the Hebrew Bible, even if a smaller canon that the Pharisees, it is impossible that they denied the existence of angels. Thus, Acts 23:8 must mean something like "The Sadducees deny the resurrection, as well as (post-mortem existence as) an angel or a spirit" – shorthand for the intermediate state – "but Pharisees acknowledge both (i.e., both resurrection and the intermediate state)."[40] Thus, in the New Testament, guardian angels of individuals are attested only once with certainty, Matt. 18.10, although they may be implied elsewhere.

Belief in guardian angels continued and grew in early Christianity. Hermas' Shepherd, who teaches him about repentance and holiness, and guides the composition of his book, is none other than his guardian angel (*Vis*. V,1-4). Hermas also repeats Philo's observation that two angels, one good and one evil, are assigned to humans (*Man*. VI,2). As already noted, Clement of Alexandria mentions the possibility that angels may be appointed to individual believers as guardians (Stromata VI,17.157.5). His uncertainty is not shared by later Fathers. Origen

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37 ὁ ἄγγελός ἐστιν αὐτοῦ.
38 So e.g., Barrett, Acts I 585.
39 So Daube, Acts 23; cf. also Viviano / Taylor, Sadducees.
40 So also Daube, Acts 23.

(De principiis I,8.1), Jerome (Commentarii in Matthaeum XVIII), Basil the Great (Homiliae de Psalmis XXXIII,5), and John Chrysostom (Homiliae de Colossenses 3), among others, all held that individual believers were assigned angelic guardians. Guardian angels are also to be found in Christian apocrypha, including *Test. Jacob* 2:5; *Test. Adam* 4:1; *Test.Sol.*[41] and *Apoc.Paul* 7-10. The latter, a third or fourth century composition,[42] is especially significant for it offers a striking parallel to *3Bar*. 11-16: Every day, when all the angels gather to praise God, "the angel of...every man and woman, who protects and preserves them," also appear in order to report the deeds of every person, "whether good or evil" (chapt. 7). Two groups of guardian angels are mentioned, those whose charges are righteous and holy, and those whose charges are sinners. The two depictions in the *Apoc.Paul* 7-10 and in *3Bar*. 11-16 are so similar that comparison of the two immediately raises suspicions of literary dependency or, more probably, of dependence on a common source or, at the very least, independent use of a common tops. However that may be, it is clear that early Christians adopted, with very little variation, Jewish conceptions regarding guardian angels.

5. Rabbinic Judaism

Space constraints mean that only a few rabbinic texts and traditions can be mentioned here. All the same, two or three will be sufficient to illustrate the fact that the Sages took over both angelic guardians of the nations and guardian angels of individuals, and developed them according to their own concerns and their methods of exegesis. For example, according to *ExodR* 32:3, R. Levi explained YHWH's promise to send an angel before the Israelites during their wilderness wanderings (Exod. 23:20-21) and Moses' objection that God Himself should lead them (Exod. 33:15) with the observation that, until the death of Moses, Israel was exempt from being appointed angelic patron. Then after Moses' demise, even Israel was handed over to an angelic patron. R.

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41 All three of these "testaments" are best regarded as Christian productions and not merely as Jewish compositions taken over and preserved by Christians. Of course, examples of the latter category, including 3 *Baruch* and the *Testament of Levi*, also served to reinforce Christian belief in guardian angels, for they were preserved and read by Christians.

42 Keith Elliot argues that the original version dates from the mid-third century, for it appears to have been known to Origen (*Hom. on Ps. 36*), but only later recensions are now in existence. See Elliot, New Testament 616-617.

Levi appeals to the appearance of the mysterious angelic commander of the army of the LORD to Joshua, recorded in Jos. 5:13-15, as the moment when Israel's patron took up his office. A related tradition (*ExodR* 32:7) holds that Israel was transferred from YHWH to an angelic patron because of the apostasy of the golden calf (Exod. 32). *Exodus Rabbah* is a late text and the attribution to R. Levi, a Tanna of the fifth generation, is probably not to be trusted. Nonetheless, given that the assumptions of these traditions are to be found in the Hebrew Bible itself (Deut 32:8-9; Dan. 10:13, 20-21), it would not be surprising if these traditions are much older than their appearance in *ExodR* 32.

The belief in guardian angels of individuals during the Tannaitic period is much more secure. For example, a baraitha in *b.Ta'an*. 11a asserts that whenever a Jew separates himself from Israel because of persecution, "the two ministering angels who accompany every man come and place their hands upon his head and say, 'So-and-so who separated himself from the community shall not behold the consolation of the community.' "[43] From R. Jose b. R Judah, a fourth generation Tanna we learn that one of these two ministering angels is good, the other evil, a tradition which we have already encountered in Philo (*QE* I,23) and Hermas (*Man*. VI,2). According to R. Jose, when these two angels accompany a Jew home on the eve of the Sabbath, if they find every thing in order and the table set for the Sabbath meal, the good angel pronounces, "May it be even thus on another Sabbath [too]." To which the evil angel must respond, "Amen." On the other hand, if they do not find everything in order and the table not set, then the evil angel pronounces, "May it be even thus on another Sabbath [too]." To which the good angel must respond, "Amen" (*b.Shabb*. 119b). Further examples from the Talmudim and Midrashim could be multiplied. It is clear that the Rabbis inherited a doctrine of heavenly guardians, both national and personal, from traditions current in the second temple period.

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43   This and the following quotations from the Babylonian Talmud are from the Epstein Soncino edition.

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The Great Opponent
The Devil in Early Jewish and Formative Christian Literature

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My article has an intentionally limited scope. It intends to give an overview of the various images and functions connected with the figure of the devil in Early Jewish and Formative Christian literature,[1] including their literary basis in the Hebrew Bible. It is not so much interested in the origin of these images in the Ancient Orient and Antiquity as in their socio-political background and meaningfulness. Early Judaism and Christianity are separated for the sake of structuring the article; it would be more to the point to regard Formative Christianity as part of the Judaisms of the first century.

1. The Beginnings of Satan in the Hebrew Bible

The Hebrew noun *satan* (שָׂטָן/śāṭān; "adversary, opponent") in general bears neutral connotations, which seems somewhat strange in view of modern linguistic usage. In the story of Balaam in Num 22:22-35, e.g., the angel of the Lord acts as an "opponent" of Balaam in favour of Israel in keeping the prophet from cursing Israel. Here the heavenly being called *satan* acts as the messenger of Jhwh in accordance with his will, not as his enemy. This is one of nine occurrences of the noun *satan* in the Hebrew Bible. In five contexts, it refers to human beings indicating their function as "adversary" or "accuser". In four, it refers to celestial beings like the angel of Num 22.[2]

Representations of evil as opponent of God and his good will in favour of humankind can appear in various forms in the Hebrew Bible: The serpent in the story of the Fall of Man (Gen 3:1-7) is an embodiment of a dimension of man which tempts man to revolt against the order of creation. The younger Wisdom of Israel can interpret the moti-

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1   For the evil in Antiquity, see Speyer, Fluchmächte.
2   Cf. Breytenbach / Day, Satan 726.

vation of the serpent as envy and the serpent as the devil: as a result of the envy of the devil death came into the world (Wis 2:24).

Prominent have been political representations of evil which threaten Israel or Zion, clearly being the result of historical experiences. So prophecy has minted an anti-figure to JHWH, trying to erect its own political or military power against the salvation plan of JHWH and behaving in accordance with its own hubris – seen from the perspective of the prophets – against JHWH; examples are Isa 10:5-15; 14:4-21; Ezek 38:1-39:22; Nah 1:11-14; Jdt 3:8; 6:2; Dan 7:17-27; 8:9-12,23-25.[3] In the political sphere, evil is experienced as an extensive threat. The end of this presumptuous political anti-figure is determined by JHWH as a being thrown off its height – a radical reversal of its former greatness. In the language of myth, a presumptuous king or ruler is thrown off the mountain of the Gods (cf. Isa 14:12-15; Ezek 28:11-19; Lam 2:1-2). As a consequence, the right world order is re-established.

It was a step further to create a mythological idea of a heavenly opponent of God who is part of the members of the heavenly council meeting, which is responsible for God's plan in creation and history (cf. Job 1:6-12; 2:1-10; 1Kgs 22:19-22). Various influences on this process from other cultures and religions are quite probable, but shall not be discussed here.[4]

A short but close look at the relevant texts is appropriate. The scene in Job 1:6-12; 2:1-10 describes a gathering of the "sons of God", the heavenly council.[5] Extrapolated from these "sons" is *the* satan (with a definite article in Hebrew), who is described as a heavenly being which performs a special function: that of an accuser against the righteous Job. "Satan" is probably not yet used as a proper name. The mythological narrative is created to give a response to a theological threatening, probably raised by the Babylonian exile and so dating back to the early postexilic time:[6] God's maintenance of the creation and the world order is taken for granted, but satan embodies the challenge of a moral order in which the righteous unfailingly reaps reward. Accordingly, satan's test case of righteousness occurs in two steps: first, the withdrawal of prospering and welfare, and then that of health. Perceived with the eyes of the protagonist Job, satan achieves his decline and disease and there-

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3   Cf. Bodendorfer, Teufel 1361.
4   Cf. Riley, Devil 244-246. For the development of the picture of a great evil figure, see Forsyth, Enemy (1987).
5   Nielsen's concentration on the father-son-relation neglects the character of the devil as a powerful heavenly being in contrast to humankind and the many connotations of the son-metaphor in Israel and Judaism (Nielsen, Satan).
6   Schwienhorst-Schönberger, Buch 344.

fore acts as the tempter of his relationship to God. What might be sa-
tan's motivation for doing so is not the subject of the narrative. But a
religious stock figure is born in order to personify the temptation of
turning away from God as a consequence of God's refusal (or inability)
to improve human conditions of life, be they individual or collective.
Without a doubt, satan is presented as a heavenly being, a member of
the heavenly council, but as such subject to God's power and acting
only on God's instructions. No dualism with a highest god and a high-
est evil force can be constructed as a basic scheme of this narrative.[7]

In a prophetical vision, Zech 3 sketches the scene of a tribunal in the
heavenly council. The Jerusalem high priest Joshua is standing in front
of the messenger or angel of JHWH, with *the* satan (again with the defi-
nite article) on his right-hand side acting as accuser. The messenger
rebukes satan with reference to the election of Jerusalem and declares
Joshua free of guilt – symbolically replacing his filthy garments with
clean, solemn clothing –, and promises him the lasting rule over the
house of God, if he will be keeping obedience to JHWH'S order. It is
evident that no word of satan's accusation is rendered. We may con-
clude that the narrative function of this figure lays in its role of an ac-
cuser, which integrates an opponent of the messenger and his support-
ing the high priest. This constellation of figures seems to mirror a socio-
political realm of the Jerusalem community in the historical context of
Zechariah's vision: in the time after the return from exile, while the
process of rebuilding the temple was going on (about 520 BCE[8]), the
restoration community in Jerusalem seems to have been deeply divided
over issues of cult and priesthood.[9] A disagreement arose about the
issue of whether Joshua should become the high priest. In the prophetic
vision, the matter is decided in front of the heavenly court – in favour
of the Joshua-group and against their opponents, being represented by
satan. What stronger argument could the Joshua-group bring to bear
than the decision of JHWH himself? An internal group division is thus
likely to develop as *Sitz im Leben* of the figure of satan, who can be de-
scribed as a projection of the conduct of the opposing group into the
divine realm.

Finally, the short reference to Satan in 1Chr 21:1 needs considera-
tion. While in the pre-text of 1Chr 21:1, 2Sam 24:1, it is JHWH himself
who provoked king David to take a census of Israel (an act obviously
judged as sinful), in 1Chr 21:1 a being called *Satan* (*without* the definite

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7   For the references to satan as a heavenly being in the OT, see Breytenbach / Day,
     Satan 727-730; Fabry, Satan 272-286.
8   Cf. Zenger, Buch 580-581.
9   See Hanson, Dawn 32-279.

article) undertakes the task to provoke David to order the sinful census. Clearly, this textual alteration being done by the Chronicler, takes away the burden of responsibility for the census from JHWH. The intention of the Chronicler may have been in a more general way due to his conception of God: to distance JHWH from tempting a human being to sin. On the other hand, in the narrower literary context, the Chronicler may have intended to keep away any disturbances from the relationship between JHWH and David, whose reign he is portraying in an idealized way. Unfortunately, the dating of Chronicles is much disputed and a long time span from the late sixth century to the early Maccabean period is supported by several scholars.[10] A later dating, however, seems more probable in view of the Chronicler's practice of integrating a whole lot of biblical books in his work, showing a (pre-)canonical awareness. If this is judged correctly, 1Chr 21:1 is later than the two other satan-texts, and the brevity of the mention of this figure can be interpreted as referring to a character well-known in its cultural context and therefore as a stage in the process of conceptualization: *Satan*, now understood as a proper name, bears the features of being an accuser (here against Israel) and a tempter (of Israel's king David).

To sum up, a cluster of motifs concerning a figure called (the) *satan* emerges from the texts discussed above. These motifs are apt to form a concept of Satan, which then becomes discernible in Early Jewish and Christian texts. The relevant motifs are: (1) Satan is a member of the heavenly council and, consequently, a supernatural being, but unambiguously subordinate to God. (2) He can fulfil the function of (a) a tempter of the righteous on earth and (b) their accuser in the divine council; (c) as a tempter, he can be the cause of impoverishment and disease. (3) Viewed from a socio-historical perspective, he can be conceived of by a group as a heavenly representative of an opposing group.

2. Conceptualizations of Satan in Early Judaism

2.1. Terminology: The Multiple Names of the Devil

In the LXX the Hebrew שָׂטָן/śātān is usually translated as the Greek noun διάβολος, which is best rendered as "adversary, antagonist, opponent".[11]

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10 See Steins, Bücher 258-260, versus Breytenbach / Day, Satan 730. Steins with good reason favours a later dating.

11 An exception constitutes 3Reg 11:14,23 LXX, where the transliteration σατᾶν is used regarding a human adversary.

From this Greek noun the Latin loanword *diabolus*, the English 'devil' and the German 'Teufel' are derived. In Jewish literature of the Second Temple Period, the term διάβολος is rather common (preferred by GLAE, Philo, Josephus; cf. TestNaph 8:4,6), while σατᾶν/σατανᾶς as Greek transliteration from the Hebrew or Aramaic is rarely used[12]. In the first century Christian writings (NT), the terms satan and devil obviously are used interchangeably, which is demonstrated by the alteration of Mark 1:13 in Matt 4:1 and Luke 4:2 and the combination of the two names within a list of epithets (great dragon, old serpent) in Rev 12:9; 20:2.[13] While some, especially early, first century Christian writings prefer Satan (Pauline epistles, Mark, Revelation), others favour devil (Q, John, Catholic Epistles).

Other terms used for a heavenly opponent of God are "Mastemah", nearly restricted to the book of Jubilees (cf. 2.2. below), and the more common "Belial", particularly in the Dead Sea Scrolls (cf. 1QM XIII 11-12; CD IV 13; V 18) and the TestXII, but also in Jub 15:33, VitProph 17:2 and 2Cor 6:15. In the Scrolls, Satan and Belial are used interchangeably.

Limited to the NT are nominal forms which denote a special function such as the evil one (Matt 6:13; 13:19; John 17:15; Eph 6:16; 1John 5:18), the depraver (1Cor 10:10; Heb 11:28), the tempter (1Thess 3:5; Matt 4:3), the accuser (Rev 12:10). Furthermore, the devil is called the enemy (Matt 13:25,39), the ruler of this world (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; perhaps an allusion to the demonized Roman Emperor), the ruler of the power of the air (Eph 2:2), the god of this aeon (2Cor 4:4), the serpent (that conceived Eve, cf. Gen 3:1-15; 2Cor 11:3; Rev 12:9; 20:2). Another proper name is Beelzebul (Mark 3:22; Matt 9:34; 12:24; Luke 11:15).

As a matter of fact, in Early Jewish writings the figure of the devil undergoes increasing literary use.[14] Some literary outlines provide important aspects of contexts and functions of this figure.

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12 Sir 21:27; TestDan 3:6; 5:6; 6:1; TestGad 4:7; GLAE 17:1; TestJob 4:3-11; 6:3-5; 27:1-7. In Rabbinic texts it becomes common from the fourth/fifth century onwards.

13 Cf. Mark 4:15 and Luke 8:12. The same synonymous reference of the two nouns is found in the somewhat later TestJob 3:3,6; cf. 16:2; 27:1 with 17:1; 26:6.

14 The reasons for this probably lay in the influences of the cultural and religious environment of post-exilic Israel; cf. Fabry, Satan 288-290.

2.2. The Book of Jubilees

In the book of Jubilees (originating from about the middle of the second century BCE), the heavenly opponent and enemy of humankind is called Mastemah, meaning literally "hostility".[15] In Jub 10:8,11 (cf. 40:9; 46:2) Mastemah is identified with Satan. Interestingly, in 3:17-23 the serpent in the garden of Eden tempting Eve to eat the forbidden fruit is not connected with Mastemah, whose first appearance[16] is in the story of Noah (from 10:8 on). Mastemah is introduced as the "Prince of the (evil) spirits" (10:8) and therefore part of the demonological worldview of the book.[17] In 10:1-12 the sons of Noah are severely threatened by the demons, which causes Noah to pray to God to bring to an end the influence of the demons. When God thereupon ordered to bind the demons, Mastemah entered the scene asking God to preserve his ability to act and to leave him a rest of his spirits. His reason for this plea is significant: it is his task to tempt and to ruin humankind because of its malice (10:8), and therefore he needs the demons as his agents. God allows a tenth of the demons to be saved from being bound underground in the place of judgement (10:9,11). As a result, Mastemah keeps his influence and authority among humankind. Clearly, he is subordinated to God, which is proved by the exodus account (48:9-18; cf. 49:2) and the sacrifice of Isaac as well (18:9-12 – confrontation with the angel of the Lord).

Mastemah effects his purpose to menace humankind throughout the history of Israel, as is exemplified first by the sons of Noah in 11:2-7, who are tempted by the spirits of Mastemah to kill each other and to commit sin, pollution and idolatry. By contrast, the notion that the influence of Mastemah and his evil spirits is broken indicates a period of blessing and welfare, a period of an undisturbed relationship to God (19:28; 40:9; 46:2; eschatologically 23:29; 50:5). Another kind of threatening humankind regards nourishment, as Mastemah commands the birds to eat away the seed in order to ruin the harvest (11:11). The

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15   For the semantic evolution of the term "Mastemah" cf. van Henten, Mastemah 553.

16   In Jub 1:20 Belchor (i.e. Beliar) is mentioned as the tempter and depraver of the people of God.

17   In Jub 10:1-8, the demons are connected with the "watchers", the fallen angels, as their forefathers (cf. Gen 6:1-4; 1Hen 6-16); in 10:5, they are identified as the souls of the dead giants. Their ruler is Mastemah, who seems therefore to be identified with the leader of these fallen angels (in 1Hen 54:6: Azazel). Cf. Riley, Devil 246. A tradition history of early accounts of these fallen angels is presented by Stuckenbruck, Origins. – The later texts 2Hen 29:4-5 and VitAd 12-16 tell about the primal fall of the devil (characterized as an "archangel" or one of the angels) out of heaven because of his hubris.

prince Mastemah acts as tempter of Abraham, because it is he who urges God to put Abraham to the test and sacrifice Isaac (17:16). He stands on the side of the Egyptians in trying to destroy Moses and the people of Israel (48:2-3,9,12,15-16). At the same time, the final loss of his ability to accuse Israel is given special mention (48:15,18). A comparison between the accounts of Isaac's sacrifice and Moses' destruction with its pre-texts shows that Mastemah obviously takes over the function of evil which originally rooted in God himself.[18] God is discharged from effecting evil.

What perhaps sheds light on the situation of the Jewish group reading Jubilees is the possibility of finding protection against the evil spirits in obeying the Mosaic law and staying in the covenant, demonstrated significantly by practicing circumcision (15:32-34). Jubilees is responding to a cultural menace, seen in the attraction of Hellenistic cultural achievements (grasped as dangerous for the identity of the group and therefore demonized), stressing the Jewish way of life and Jewish identity markers. So, too, the socio-political function of the figure of Mastemah gains importance: he provides a clear, supernaturally personalized concept of the enemy in order to lead the readers to resist the cultural and political powers of a dominant (the Hellenistic) culture. To conclude, the picture of Mastemah corresponds with the above motifs, supplemented by exercising his power through demons (and animal agents).

2.3. The Dead Sea Scrolls

Well attested in the Dead Sea Scrolls as name of the evil force, the devil, is *Belial*/בליעל, which is philologically most likely rendered with "wickedness".[19] Especially in the War Scroll (1QM) and the Hymns Scroll (1QH), an ongoing struggle between the powers of good and of evil is described. In the heavenly realm, it can be depicted as a battle between the angel Michael and Belial, and as a human counterpart, the Teacher of Righteousness, representing the forces of light and good, stands opposite the wicked priest as his opponent, representing the

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18   So Jub 17:16 / Gen 22:1-2; Jub 48:2 / Exod 4:24; cf. 1Chr 21:1 / 2Sam 24:1.
19   Sperling, Belial 169-170. For the Essene picture of Belial and its possible development see Steudel, God and Belial; further Martone, Evil. The symbols of evil found in the Scrolls and their history-of-religions background displays Nitzan, Evil. A possible development out of Enochic Judaism is discussed by Suter, Theodicy.

forces of darkness and evil.[20] The "people of the lot of Belial" are opposed to the "people of the lot of God" (1QS I 16 – II 9). Unquestionably, however, Belial is subordinated to God, as 1QS III 25 states that God created both the spirits of light and those of darkness.

It is important that in the eschatological war Belial will be defeated by God and his agents, what results in the permanent annihilation of Belial and all the sons of darkness, the evil forces, be they angelic or human (1QM I 1-16). The battles which go with this war are supernaturally guided by the prayers and signals of the priests, leading to the impression of ritually or liturgically structured events. In a pragmatic perspective, that is why eschatological hope is justified for the community which is struggling with its powerful opponents, for the present age is distinguished by the community as the time of Belial's rule,[21] his hostility against the children of light (i.e. the in-group). In 1QM XIII 11, Belial is called "angel of hostility", the one who brings destruction, who accuses and pronounces guilty. In 1QS III 20-25 and 1QM XIII 10-12 an antithesis is described between the Prince of Light and Belial, the Angel of Darkness:[22] Belial rules all children of falsehood, leads all children of righteousness astray and causes them to fulfil unlawful deeds.

All the more important is the possibility of protection against Belial. To this end 4Q286 fr. 7, II 1-12 formulates curses against Belial and his associates (cf. 1QM XIII 4-5), which is betraying a feeling of a constant threat to the community. In a more reflected way, protection against Belial is expected by God's covenant and faithfulness (1QM XIV 8-10), by obeying the Torah of Moses, circumcision and reversal (CD XVI 1-8; cf. VI 11 – VII 9; Jub 15:32-34), i.e. belonging to the *yahad*. In the pesher 4Q174 III 7-9, the righteous are promised rescue from the sons of Belial (probably the Pharisees). Interestingly, these protecting factors are identity markers of Israel in general and of the priestly orientated community in particular. So they can be conceived as a reflection of the social situation of the group behind the Scrolls which is trying to protect itself against another culturally influential force.[23] The devil is functioning as the heavenly stock figure of the opposing group (i.e. the incumbent High Priest in Jerusalem and the associated priesthood, seen

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20 Cf. Schiffman, Community 50; Sperling, Belial 171. Another human representation of opponents is mentioned in CD V 17-19: Moses and Aaron / Prince of the Lights – Jannes and his brothers / Belial.

21 Cf. CD IV 12-19 (three nets of Belial: fornication, riches, defilement of the temple); XII 2; 1QM XIV 9-10; 4Q491 fr. 8-10, I; 4Q390; 11Q05 XIX 15.

22 See von der Osten-Sacken, Gott 116,198.

23 In CD VIII 1-3 Belial becomes God's eschatological instrument in annihilating the apostates of the community.

in connection with the nations and the apostates of Israel), which is unambiguously qualified as substantially evil. As the "sons of Belial" (4Q174 III 8; 4Q286 fr. 7, II 6; 4Q386 fr. 1, II 3), the other group is obviously disparaged. The metaphor of "battle" reflects the seriousness of the encounter as seen by the marginalized group of the Dead Sea Scrolls. The dangerousness of the opponents' way of life is depicted by means of the metaphor of a viper's venom, which causes pain, disease and weakness (1QH XIII 26-29). Being tested and purified by Belial provides an explanation of the present suffering of the *yahad*, but in the end originates in God himself, who uses Belial as his instrument and will provide eschatological release. In this regard, Belial is a function of the eschatological dualism of the community of the Scrolls. Hence the absence of Satan is a characteristic of the Eschaton (4Q504 fr. 1-2, IV 8-13).

2.4. The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs

TestLev 19:1 provokes a decision, metaphorically speaking, between light and darkness or, on a personal level, between the law of the Lord and the deeds of Beliar. Two ways, a good and a bad one, are available for the journey of life (TestAss 1:3-9). This phenomenon, which I would like to call an "ethical dualism", is characteristic of TestXII and resembles in a way the dualistic features found in the Dead Sea Scrolls.[24] Beliar and his evil spirits throughout epitomize tempting by the desires and leading a wicked life.[25] Significantly, the spirits of Beliar have to ask (God for) permission to tempt humankind (TestBen 3:3). TestDan 6:2,4 mentions in passing that "Satan" (here also called the "enemy") rules an empire, whereby a demonological worldview is reflected. Frequently, the demand is issued that the people of Israel be on their guard against the threat of Beliar and his spirits and to overcome Beliar by avoiding bad conduct, living in purity and without sin and practicing the good (TestDan 6:1-8; cf. TestRub 4:11; TestSim 5:3; TestIss 7:1-7; TestNaph 8:4,6; TestJos 6:1). Who decides on Beliar will be ruled by him (TestAss 1:8), but who keeps the law and the commandment of the Lord makes Beliar flee (TestDan 5:1). The instruction conveyed by this is to keep Israel's way of life. TestAss 6:4-6 adds an eschatological mo-

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24   For the difference in the form Beliar / Belial cf. Sperling, Belial 170. Beliar is perhaps reminiscent of a pun on the opposition of lightness / darkness connected with this figure. Cf. the same dualistic imagery of light and darkness in 2Cor 6:14-15.

25   TestIss 6:1; TestDan 5:5-6; TestAss 3:2; TestJos 7:4; TestBen 3:4; 6:1; 7:1. With regard to whoring TestRub 4:7,11; TestSim 5:3; wrath TestDan 1:7; 3:6; 4:7; hate TestGad 4:7.

tivation: the eschatological fate will prolong the earthly decision between following the angels of the Lord or of Beliar.

It is not until the eschatological new creation that Beliar will be bound and thus made ineffective and the evil forces be powerless (TestLev 18:10-12). The promise is Beliar's eschatological loss of power: God's victory over Beliar in the final battle (TestDan 5:10-11) and retaliation (TestLev 3:3) are announced; Beliar will be thrown into the never-ending fire (TestJud 25:3).

2.5. The Greek Life of Adam and Eve (GLAE)

At the centre of the narration of GLAE stands the story of the Fall of Man, told by Eve herself, who was deceived by the devil (GLAE 15:1-30:1).[26] As far as I can see, this is one of the first instances of the devil explicitly mentioned as the cause of the Fall and integrated in the account of Gen 3.[27] Wis 2:23-24, in which the devil's motivation is named, provides another early mention: the devil's envy brought death into the world.[28] Initially "the enemy" (ἐχθρός: 2:4; 7:2; 8:2; 15:1; 25:4) serves as a cipher for the devil (διάβολος); the identification becomes clear in 15:3. He places enmity between humankind and God's commandments (25:4), acting as tempter and depraver, which becomes paradigmatic in the deceiving of Eve (15:1; 16:5; 23:5; 26:1; 30:1; 39:2; 42:7).

The devil first makes the serpent envious because of Adam's higher rank in paradise in order to persuade it to become his instrument (16:2-5).[29] To deceive Eve and Adam and to persuade them to eat from the tree of life (which causes death), the devil takes hold first of the serpent and then of Eve, finding a living thing to speak through (16:5; 17:4; 18-19; 21:3). The result is described as losing righteousness (δικαιοσύνη) and glory (δόξα) (20:1-2; cf. 21:2,6), i.e. losing the immediate closeness to the will of God; in 8:2, this is interpreted as leaving the covenant (διαθήκη).

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26 GLAE (or the Apocalypse of Moses) probably originated in the late first century AD. Thus Dochhorn, Apokalypse 149-172; Schreiber, Mensch 50. – Only the (later) Latin, Armenian and Georgian versions contain the story of the fall of Satan; cf. Vita Adae 11-17.

27 Cf. Dochhorn, Apokalypse 287. In 1Hen 69:6 it is one of the fallen angels, Gadreel, who tempted Eve. Presumably later is 2Hen 31:3-6.

28 For the envy of the serpent cf. Josephus, ant. 1:41.

29 At this point the story adds a scene in which the devil – unexpectedly he is called "Satan" here – joined the angelic court to worship God, appearing as an angel (17:1-2). His subordination to God and perhaps his hypocrisy are demonstrated by that. Dochhorn, Apokalypse 296,321-323, however, judges this notice as an interpolation.

As far as the theological background is concerned, in the scene of bringing Adam and Eve out of paradise the question arises whether it is God's fault that humankind has to suffer (i.e. is far from paradise). The angels, however, are stating God's just decision (27:1-5). Thereby the responsibility of man is emphasized, and a dualism is fixed between God's good intent with man and the devil's will to deprave man. Between these two spheres of influence (which are not thought to be ontologically equal) man has to decide: His way to salvation leads through the struggles of life which he can withstand by being vigilant and protecting himself from evil (28:4; 30:1). The key word φυλάττειν refers to leading a good life (28:4; 30:1) and, more specifically, to keeping God's commandment (23:3; 24:3) and to the task of guarding the paradise (15:2; 17:3).[30] So vigilance becomes a central motif of the story's pragmatics. Shelter and rescue from evil can be achieved by keeping God's commandment (ἐντολή; 23:3; 24:1,3; 25:1; 39:1).

Adam, who embodies man per se, is granted forgiveness and redemption not until his death (37:1-6; cf. 13:3-5; 41:2). An eschatological reversal (along the *Urzeit-Endzeit* scheme) is promised by God himself, and it will bring about a reversal of the roles of the devil and Adam: Adam will be seated on the throne of the devil, and the devil will be thrown down from his height and condemned (39:2-3) – in GLAE, too, the eschaton is characterized by the absence of the devil.

In the narrative of GLAE, the devil embodies the constant threat to man of being deceived and depraved by evil, which inevitably leads to disease and death (3:1; 5:2-3; 6:3; 7:1; 8:2; 9:2; 14:2) and all hardships of the body (24:1-25:4). Therefore, the devil provokes violating God's commandment. For the readers, he provides a concept of the enemy in order to become aware of his dangerousness and to pay attention to him intensely. The context is less political, but perhaps a cultural encounter between Jewish and Hellenistic influence, or, more generally, an answer to the challenge of a threatened life and the dominance of a pagan culture.

2.6. Other Early Jewish Writings

In the Parables of 1Hen (1Hen 37-71), no clear picture or narrative role of Satan emerges.[31] The fallen angels fulfil the function of tempting

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30 Cf. Dochhorn, Apokalypse 289,303.
31 Parts of the Parables originated in the first century BCE, important passages were written in the first decades of the first century AD. Cf. Schreiber, Gesalbter 324-325.

humankind (e.g. 64:2; 67:6-7).[32] In the portrayal of the last judgement of the fallen angels (67:4-69:25; cf. 21:6,10), the leaders of these angels are charged of having been tempting the angels of lower rank to get involved with the daughters of men (69:4-5; clearly an allusion to Gen 6:1-4); one of them tempted Eve (69:6).[33] The devil plays no role in these events. Only gradually does a sexual connotation enter the story of Eve's temptation (cf. 4Macc 18:8). Otherwise only fragmentary pieces of an image of the devil can be detected; "Satan" is rather an attribute to connote evil power. In 1Hen 65:6, acts of violence are connected with "the satans" (plural!), which seems to allude to the host of Satan, the evil spirits (known from other sources). In 54:6, the fallen angels (54:5: the host of Azazel)[34] are thrown into fire for punishment because they had become servants of Satan and tempted humankind. In 53:3, Satan seems to be the originator of the end-time "instruments of torture" prepared for the earthly rulers.

In Sib 3:63-67 (first century AD), Beliar is prophesied to lead astray the people with great signs. He is characterized as coming ἐκ Σεβαστηνῶν (3:63), which perhaps alludes to the Latin *Augusti* and means the diabolical character of the Roman Emperor, probably Nero.[35] If this interpretation is correct,[36] the threatening political power is dismissed as an agent of the devil.

When God's eschatological reign is accomplished, the end (and annihilation) of the devil is promised in AssMos 10:1.

The novel of Joseph and Aseneth integrates the devil in its treatment of the cultural encounter between Judaism and paganism: The polytheistic (Egyptian) culture is metaphorically depicted as a child of the "wild old lion", which is a cipher for the devil and his dangerousness; while the Egyptian Aseneth is turning away from the idols of her traditional culture, she has to fear the persecution of this "father of the Egyptian gods" (12:9-10). Yet, the God of Israel is able to rescue her (12:11-14).

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32 Cf. in the "Book of the Watchers" 1Hen 8:1-4; 9:6-8; 10:7-8.

33 Cf. Gen 3. For the first time in Early Jewish literature a connection between Gen 3 and Gen 6 is made here; it is still missing in Josephus, ant. 1:41; cf. Forsyth, Old Enemy 223. For the roots of identifying the serpent with the devil, see Martinek, Schlange (1996).

34 Azazel and the fallen angels are also mentioned in the fragment 4Q180 fr. 1, 7-9.

35 Collins, Egyptian Judaism 82-87; Collins, Oracles 360,363; Sperling, Belial 171.

36 Merkel, Sibyllinen 1060 favours an allusion to Sebaste, since 25 BCE the name of Samaria, so the conflict would be between Jews and Samarians – but also political.

Interestingly, in the apocalyptic writings 4Esr and 2Bar, the devil is not even mentioned.[37] This observation shows that the devil is not necessarily a stock figure of ethical or eschatological discourses.

2.7. Summary

The following motifs can be added to the cluster mentioned above, forming together a concept of the devil: (1) The devil can take hold of a person (TestNaph 8:6; TestAss 1:8; GLAE 16:5; 17:4; 21:3; Luke 22:3; John 13:27). (2) The devil is the ruler of the evil demons, a motif that reflects a demonological worldview (Jub 10:8; TestDan 6:1). (3) When the influence of the devil is broken, a period of blessing or the Eschaton, respectively, is opened (Jub 19:28; 40:9; 46:2; GLAE 39:2-3; TestLev 18:10-12; TestJud 25:3; AssMos 10:1; Rom 16:20; Luke 11:20; 10:18).

3. Prospects for the New Testament

The different names for the devil common in early Christian writings show that these writings take part in the concepts of the devil prevailing in Early Judaism. In the following, I try to categorize the predominant images of the devil in the earliest Christian writings.

3.1. Traditional Roles of the Devil

That the devil is the ruler over a kingdom of darkness is a presupposition underlying the relevant texts. As such he possesses cosmic power and a host of evil spirits or demons to oppose the angels of God and to deprave humankind. The demonic host is mentioned, e.g., in Mark 3:22; Matt 12:24; 25:41; Luke 11:15,18; Rev 12:7,9. Being called Beelzebul, the devil is the principal of the demons (Mark 3:22-26 par.). In Eph 2:2; 6:11-12 (cf. 1:21; Col 2:15), he is named as the chief of dark and wicked cosmic spirits and forces effective in the heavens, the air and on earth.[38] The power of the devil affects and harms the whole world. Therefore he is called the "ruler of this world" in John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11 and the "god of this world" in 2Cor 4:4; Acts 26:18 states the "dominion of Sa-

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37   Only in 2Bar 48:42 is the serpent named.
38   Cf. astral elements in the world in Gal 4:3,9 and conflicts in heaven between Michael and the devil about the corpse of Moses in Jude 9. That the devil is subordinated to God is evident in his asking for permission to tempt the disciples in Luke 22:31.

tan" in the world (cf. Luke 4:6; Col 1:13; Eph 2:1-2; 1John 5:19). The devil brings his negative influence on the world to bear by causing disease and disability (2Cor 12:7; Matt 12:22-24; Luke 9:37-45; 11:14; 13:10-13,16; Acts 5:16), often by demonic possession (Mark 1:34; 3:22; 5:1-20), and by tempting and leading the righteous to sin, i.e. into opposition to God (Matt 4:1-11 par.; 1Cor 7:5; 2Cor 2:11; 11:3; 1Tim 3:6-7; 5:15; 1John 3:8,10). He deceives humankind (2Cor 11:3; Rev 12:9; 20:3), e.g. by disguising himself as an angel of light (2Cor 11:14), and makes it blind to the light of the gospel (2Cor 4:4). Thereby the devil intends to induce the righteous to break with the Christian community. 1Thess 2:18 mentions Satan as a supernatural embodiment of a hindrance to Paul's missionary work. In Mark 4:15 (Luke 8:12; Matt 13:19) Satan steals away the word of salvation.

3.2. The Overcoming of the Devil in Jesus Christ

It appears specific to the Christian conviction that the eschatological extermination of the devil and all evil has already begun. Already here in the present world the kingdom of God proves to be more powerful than the kingdom of Satan. Jesus is the one who has seen the fall of Satan out of heaven, as Luke 10:18 narrates (cf. John 12:31), taking up a well known motif. Jesus as empowered representative of God's kingdom is able to cast out demons (Mark 1:21-28).[39] Metaphorically speaking, he is able to attack and overpower the "Strong Man", i.e. the devil, by entering his house and carrying off his property, i.e. releasing people formerly subjected to demonic oppression (Matt 12:28-29; Luke 11:20-22). Jesus' healing activity means releasing people from being under the control of the devil (Acts 10:38).

Jesus had proved able to overcome the temptation by Satan, as the Synoptic accounts of the temptation story reveal (Mark 1:12-13; Matt 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13). Seen from a history-of-religions perspective, the archetypal battle myth is historicized as a confrontation between the devil and Jesus.[40] In the Matthean and Lukan versions, political overtones can be clearly heard: giving wheat or bread to feed the people – in the Roman Imperial ideology a sign of the Golden Age; ruling the kingdoms of the earth (Luke 4:5: οἰκουμένη) with all their glory. Jesus overcomes the temptation to act on the same military level and with the same weapons as the political powers, i.e. to become an agent of the

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39   For Jesus' exorcisms as proof of the defeat of Satan's kingdom, see Evans, Inaugurating.
40   See Aune, Teufel 184.

devil possessing power over the earthly kingdoms. This attitude be-
comes paradigmatic of the Jesus community to understand their own
role in the political sphere as a small and marginalized group.

Later accounts attribute the power to destroy the influence of the
devil to Jesus as "son of God" (1John3:8) or, more specifically, to his
death (Heb 2:14). In 1John 2:1, Jesus acts as a heavenly advocate
(against the accusations of the devil).

It is the disciples' faith, i.e. their loyalty to Christ, which protects
them from the temptations and persecutions of the devil (Luke 22:31-
32; Acts 26:18; Eph 6:16; 1Pet 5:8-9). Shielded by the arms of God, the
Christian is able to resist the devil's attacks (Eph 6:11-17). Resisting the
devil makes him flee (Jas 4:7). Because of Christ's significance the Jew-
ish identity markers like circumcision, purity et al. are no longer neces-
sary as protection against the devil. Thus in Christian thought faith in
Christ in a way takes the place of these identity markers.

With regard to the Lukan theology of salvation history, the particu-
lar question arises whether Luke was thinking of a time without Satan
between Satan's leaving Jesus for a certain time after the temptation
failed (Luke 4:13) and his taking hold of Judas Iscariot before the pas-
sion (22:3), as Conzelmann puts it.[41] The devil, however, is always ac-
tive throughout Jesus' ministry, and he is constantly trying to gain
power over the people of Israel. That becomes obvious in some texts:
according to the interpretation of the parable of the sower, the devil
takes the word out of the heart of newly interested hearers (8:12); in the
Beelzebul controversy, the two kingdoms of God and Satan exist and
are in battle with each other (11:14-23) – in Jesus, the power of God over
the devil and his demons is effective, in his exorcisms, the kingdom of
God proves already present (11:20); the same is true for the healing
story in 13:11-17, where Jesus successfully combats disease and there-
fore Satan. What Jesus does is nothing but effectively exercising the
power of God over Satan in the earthly realm, in an especially public
way in his exorcisms, and this is possible because the devil is already
cast out of heaven and so *in principle* has lost his power. The vision of
Luke 10:18 means that in heaven God's kingdom has already won the
final victory over Satan. The final eschatological defeat of Satan is an-
ticipated in Jesus' ministry.

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41   Conzelmann, Mitte. Against it Kalms, Sturz 210-211; Aune, Teufel 184.

3.3. Group Conflicts

The Beelzebul controversy (Mark 3:22-27par.) contains a memory of a social conflict between the wandering group around Jesus and the structures of Galilean village life, challenged by the unconventional way of life of the Jesus group. The village leaders' strategy of treating the Jesus group as outcasts identifies Jesus as an instrument of Beelzebul by ascribing Jesus' power to cast out demons to the devil and thereby clearly compromising his healing activity. The social acceptance of the exorcisms depends upon the affiliation to the right group and tradition (cf. the acceptable exorcisms of "your sons" in Jesus' reply Luke 11:19); it is a question of being insiders or outsiders.[42]

In the allegorization of the parable of the tares in the wheat in Matt 13:36-43, the conflict between the Son of Man and the devil about the kingdom of heaven intends an eschatological motivation of the community and a devaluation of the ones who reject the kingdom as children of the devil, using a dualistic scheme. The devil as the opponent per se functions as a paradigm of the opposing Jewish majority refusing to accept Christ; so in John 8:44, the Jewish authorities are charged with having the devil as their father, and in Rev 2:9; 3:9, the Jewish communities in Asia Minor are dismissed as "synagogue of Satan". An opponent of the Christian mission from outside is called "son of the devil" in Acts 13:10.

Especially threatening appears opposition as an in-group phenomenon.[43] Connecting such opponents with the devil means a devaluation and categorization of the opposing group. Thus Paul in 2Cor 11:13-15 states that the false apostles are pretending to be apostles of Christ and are at this like Satan, who plays the part of an angel of the light, because they are his servants.[44] When the devil is able to influence the minds or take hold of individuals in order to use them as his instruments or agents, a negative attitude to a special way of behaviour can be expressed; examples are Peter (Mark 8:33; Luke 22:31), Judas Iscariot (Luke 22:3,53; John 6:70; 13:2,27) and Ananias (Acts 5:3). To cast a wrongdoer out of the community means handing him over to the rule

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42 For a more detailed dealing with the Beelzebul controversy, see Ebner, Jesus 126-144.

43 Pagels, Origin (1995) brings into focus the social implications of the figure of the devil: to articulate conflicts and to indicate others as enemies. Problematic is her thesis that early Christians use the devil *in a special way* to morally dismiss opponents, in particular the Jews – which is a feature *common* to Early Jewish and Christian circles, not separating them.

44 Cf. 2Tim 2:26; Rom 16:17-20.

of Satan in the world – admittedly with the purpose of producing re-
pentance by his suffering: 1Cor 5:5; 1Tim 1:20.

3.4. The Devil in the Revelation of John

In Revelation, the devil plays a significant role, being the central figure
in the narrative complex in Rev 12, which combined different myths.[45]
Rev 12:7-9 describe a battle in heaven: Michael and his angels defeat the
dragon and his angels and throw the dragon down on earth. As com-
parable Early Jewish accounts show, this eschatological destruction
marks the beginning of the final salvation of Israel (cf. Luke 10:18; John
12:31). With that Satan loses his traditional role as heavenly prosecutor
(κατήγωρ) of the righteous before God (Rev 12:10; cf. Zech 3:1-2; Job 1-
2). But he continues on earth to act against the Christian communities
in Asia Minor. So the devil is testing the communities by imprisonment
and threatening (Rev 2:10). To serve this purpose, he is using an impor-
tant instrument: the Roman Emperor and his propaganda apparatus,
coded by the two beasts of Rev 13. In Revelation, the political rulers are
understood as empowered by the devil, and as such dismissed as his
bad instruments (2:13; 13:1-8; 17:8-13; cf. 2Thess 2:9-12). More generally,
the threat by the strange but dominant Hellenistic-Roman culture is
implied in the "depths of Satan" in Rev 2:24.[46]

As a next step in the cosmic drama, the devil is put into prison for a
time span of a thousand years,[47] which can be read as an interim messi-
anic kingdom. After this time, the devil will be released (a motif not to
be found in Early Jewish apocalypticism), and he will gather the na-
tions for the final combat against the righteous ones (20:7-9). Finally,
through the power of God he is vanquished and thrown into the fiery
sea to be annihilated (20:10).[48] In view of God's final victory over Satan
and his associates, already proved true in heaven, John conveys hopes
that may lead his readers not to condone the present dominance of the
Roman culture and to contradict and resist its threat.

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45 The mythological background and its narrative function are discussed by Schreiber,
    Sternenfrau (2007).
46 More about that in Schreiber, Sternenfrau 455-456.
47 Rev 20:2. Cf. Azazel put in chains 1Hen 10:4-6.
48 Cf. the annihilation of the devil in Jub 50:5; AssMos 10:1; Matt 25:41; Rom 16:20.
    Wengst, Devil 72 stresses that the devil is a way of speaking of the coming God.

4. Conclusion

In Early Judaism and Formative Christianity, the devil forms a stock figure in the religious drama of God and the salvation of humankind. He appears as a mythological, supernatural personification of enmity towards the righteous and as the great opponent of God.

There is no doubt that the devil is subordinated to God. The subsequent question why God, obviously being superior to the devil, does not simply annihilate him, is not asked in this form, let alone answered. Narrative texts more likely reflect experiences than offer systematic solutions. Evil exists as a reality. In the last analysis, it is not possible to understand evil; but the myth al least allows for articulating it. So a strict concept of *Entmythologisierung* of the devil does not do justice to this literary character bearing a variety of associations on the part of the readers.[49] Talking of the devil means producing a speech event which fulfils theological and social functions. Today we can grasp the "reality" of the devil on the same level as the reality of the angels, to which category he traditionally belongs.

The concept of Satan corresponds to the various and multifarious experiences of evil in personal and social every-day life. While caution should be urged as to simple causalities, it is clear that in the literary contexts the devil appears as a cipher for an existential political, cultural or personal threat; in the personification of the devil, evil becomes visible. On the one side, evil is experienced as an occurrence like disease and death, the causes of which are grounded outside human influence and therefore demand a cosmological explanation. On the other side, the devil helps to make clear for the in-group what is evil and which behaviour is wrong.

The concept of the devil allows for an identification and judgement of the social or collective enemy, partially in connection with the experience of powerlessness in a minority situation. The opposing group can unambiguously be dismissed as associates of the devil. Inherent, however, is the danger of simplistic condemnations. More generally, the figure of the devil can help to define the negative quality of the present time, i.e. to motivate the hearers to withstand the temptation of losing their own Jewish/Christian identity. Eschatologically, the annihilation of the devil will bring about a new quality of the reality of life, heightening the motivation to stay within the group.

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49   Different statements have been submitted by Haag, Teufelsglaube 24-25,387,504 and, to the contrary, Baumbach, Funktion 166-167.

Already in the present Satan can be overcome with the means that form the identity of the religious group or community, i.e. good conduct, constantly doing the will of God as found in the Torah or in Christ, respectively. The Christian change in the formation of identity can be grasped in Rom 7, where there is no possibility to overcome sin by means of the Torah; the solution now is given by the "event of Jesus Christ" that fundamentally lays new foundations for the relationship between man, sin and God (Rom 8:31-39). Whereas in general sin is attributed to the devil as its cause, in some cases sin acts as an independent, effective disastrous power (e.g., in Rom 7).

Open questions remain. One concerns the guilt of man in view of the devil being the cause of a violation. But as GLAE, e.g., makes clear, the work of the devil does not exonerate man of his guilt (without actually clarifying the interrelation). Open, too, remains the reason for the process of removing evil from God. Is it to avoid burdening God with the responsibility for man to do evil (as GLAE offers a slight glimpse)? But this process is not necessarily dependent on theodicy, but is perhaps meant to structure the cosmos and to achieve an eschatologically orientated hope of salvation from evil. At any rate, the theological outsourcing of evil allows for producing a type figure *sui generis* – the great opponent.

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Heavenly Beings Brought Low:
A Study of Angels and the Netherworld

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1. Introduction

In contemporary theological reflection one tends to think of hell as a condition or state of existence absent of God and God's goodness. If one were to envision hell as a distinct realm, one might even associate it with a supernatural, malevolent figure like Satan or Belial. How might such views compare to ancient Jewish and Christian perspectives on hell? For a study of early Jewish and Christian beliefs concerning the afterlife, one cannot turn immediately to modern views of hell. To be sure, though some in antiquity understood the deceased to be assigned indiscriminately to a realm of the dead (such as Hades, for example), one finds also in the religious imagination of the time places associated with post-mortem punishments (and rewards) that might be thought comparable to a "hell" (or "paradise"). In such realms, including those associated with chastisement, one finds not the absence of God, but rather a domain that is under God's complete control. In fact, even the infernal sites are frequently governed by heavenly representatives, angels. In some instances, angels themselves are confined to or incarcerated within such realms.

In this essay we consider what heavenly beings could possibly have to do with the infernal realms or post-mortem places of punishment. From an examination of Second Temple period and late antique Jewish and Christian works, it seems that angels have plenty to do with such realms. We consider first those angels sentenced to punishment in numinous places comparable to hell since some of our earliest descriptions concerning such realms involve the chastisement of heavenly or celestial beings. Then, we explore angels who are in charge of infernal realms, who may serve as guides to such realms, and who administer punishments in such realms.

2. Hades, Gehenna, Tartarus, Hell: What's in a Name?

Defining the infernal realm or hell within the Second Temple period
and Late Antiquity is not a facile project as this era is marked by in-
credible diversity of thought concerning the nature of the afterlife.[1]
Sites traditionally associated with the infernal world — the realm of the
dead (Sheol [שאול; cf., for example, Isa 38:10, 18; Ps 88:4; Job 7:9; Qoh
9:10][2] or Hades [ἅδης; cf., for example, *Ilias* 9.158-59; *Odyssea* 11.487;
Josephus, *Antiquitates judaicae* 18:14; Matt 11:23; Luke 16:23; Acts 2:27;
Rev 1:18; 20:13-14][3]), Gehenna (γέεννα; Lat, *Gehenna*), a fiery place of
punishment or for judgment of the wicked (Matt 5:22; 29-30; Mark 9:43,
45, 47; *Sib. Or.* 1.103; 2.292; *4 Ezra* 7:36; *Ascen. Is.* 4:14; *m. Qidd.* 4.14; *t.
Ber.* 6.15; *t. Sanh.* 13.3; *b. Ber.* 28b; *Midr. Tehillim* 31.3)[4] and Tartarus
(τάρταρος), traditionally a subterranean prison or abyss where the titans
or other sorts of celestial beings were punished (*Ilias* 8.13-16; *Theogonia*
713-35; LXX Prov 30:16; Job 40:20; 41:24; *1En* 20:2 [GrPan; Eth BM 485;
Berl, Tana 9]; 2Pet 2:4; *Sib. Or.* 1.101)[5] — are distinctive in origin and
purpose; further, because of the variety of views held on the afterlife,
each of these terms could be employed differently by ancient authors,
not always in uniform manner.

 Although it is not the goal to explore at length such sites and to ad-
dress the larger and important question as to how and why views of

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1 See, for example, Segal, Life.
2 Sheol — the netherworld and realm for the dead — is variously presented in the
  Hebrew Bible. See Lewis, Dead 101-105, and also Tromp, Conceptions 23-46; 66-70;
  154-156. See also Yamauchi, Life 43-44. For a reassessment of Sheol, see Levenson,
  Resurrection, who challenges the view of Sheol as a shadowy netherworld and uni-
  versal destination to which even the pious dead are confined. Levenson (Resurrec-
  tion 78) defines Sheol, rather, as "the continuation of the gloomy circumstances of
  the individual's death" and "the prolongation of the unfulfilled life."
3 Homeric references to Hades suggest it to be a gloomy realm of shades, to which all
  are destined, though the sources do not present an entirely consistent picture. See,
  for example, Burkert, Religion 194-199, and Bolt, Life 63-64; 66. On Jewish and Chris-
  tian employment of the term, which typically replaces Sheol in the LXX, see Bauck-
  ham, Hades 14-15; Hades especially comes to serve as an interim place for the dead,
  Bauckham (Fate 34 and Hades 14-15) argues, who are detained there as they await
  final judgment and resurrection.
4 Gehenna as a place of punishment or of judgment emerges in the Second Temple
  period. The name derives from the Valley of Hinnom (גיא הנם) in Jerusalem which
  had been used for worship of the Canaanite deities Molech and Baal, worship often
  involving the practice of immolation of children (2Kgs 16:3; 21:6; 2Chr 28:3; 33:6; Jer
  7:31; 19:4-5; 32:35). Thus, the valley of Hinnom became associated with detestable or
  deplorable acts; in 1En 27:1, it is described as the accursed valley.
5 See West, Philosophy 26, and Sourvinou-Inwood, Death 66 n. 165. See also Platon,
  Phaedrus 113e-114a and Vergilius, Aeneis 6.548. On similarities between the biblical
  story of the angels and myth of the fall of the titans, see Pearson, Reminiscence 71-80.

the afterlife develop in post-exilic Judaism, one should observe that interest in the afterlife, especially in the infernal realms, is keyed also to matters of theodicy and eschatology.[6] God's justness is maintained as justice is available finally to humans after death; through post-mortem judgment, the righteous and impious are respectively rewarded and chastised. Such theological impulses are prevalent in Second Temple period texts (for example, 2Maccabees 7; 2Macc 12:39-45), especially those considered apocalyptic in orientation (cf. *1En* 22; Dan 12:1-3).

At the same time as literature suggests increasing interest in the nature of the afterlife, one observes a more prominent role for angels in Second Temple literature.[7] Angels, variously named, are clearly part of ancient Israelite tradition and are found in various books of the Hebrew Bible, even within the oldest strata. Even so, an interest in angels seems to have flourished in the Second Temple period as speculation concerning the heavenly realm and its inhabitants grew.[8] Many of the roles assumed by angels are extensions of what we find already in the numerous depictions of angels in earlier biblical texts.[9] Angels are messengers, guides, interpreters, and administrators of various functions within the cosmos in Second Temple period literature. Angels also come to be identified by personal names and may be organized in hierarchical orders; thus, archangels in groups of four or seven emerge in such texts. Various classes of angels are also distinguished; these serve in various levels of heaven, have particular tasks or are appointed to be in charge of realms within or functions that relate to the cosmos. These developed portraits of angels proliferate in the Jewish and Christian religious imagination, especially in apocalyptic, deuterocanonical, pseudepigraphal and apocryphal texts of the Second Temple period and Late Antiquity. As such, angels are also to be found in association with traditions involving the realm of the dead, post-mortem places of punishment, and places we might associate with hell.

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6   On Second Temple and late antique perspectives of afterlife, see, for example, Nickelsburg, Resurrection, and Bauckham, Life 80-95.

7   See, for example, Bietenhard, Welt 101-104; Mach, Entwicklungsstadien 5-9; 114-127 and Olyan, Thousands 3-13, on the growing interest in angels and their spheres of influence in the post-exilic period and the reasons for such developments.

8   Newsom, Angels 249, 252-253.

9   So Newsom, Angels 249.

3. Angels Sentenced to the Infernal Realm

Many apocalyptic texts from the Second Temple period and Late Antiquity take up a tradition that concerns angels mating with women. The story appears familiar from Gen 6:1-4 where the sons of God (sometimes translated as "sons of heaven") mate with the daughters of men. Though we may not understand perfectly what the biblical author had in mind, already by the third century BCE, some individuals had come to regard the "sons of God" in Genesis as angels.[10] The union of these heavenly beings with mortals results in the birth of Nephilim, and otherwise, seems incidental within Genesis. Literature from the Second Temple period presents the descent of celestial beings — in these works unambiguously angels which are often referred to by the designation "watchers" — and relations with humankind as quite problematic.[11] From the perspective of such texts, the angels' mating with women, their spawning offspring which are violence-prone giants, as well as their teaching humankind forbidden arts and knowledge corrupt the earth and contribute to the proliferation of evil.[12] These angels are presented as rebellious and as engaging in the illicit crossing of boundaries; in certain manifestations of the tradition, for example, we learn that the celestial creatures were to remain in heaven and further, as spiritual beings, they were not intended for procreation (cf., for example, *1En* 15:2-7).[13] God, prompted by archangels, intervenes and punishes these heavenly beings which have crossed the proverbial line by confining them in an otherworldly prison, a veritable hell.

Scholars who have explored the accounts of the angels' descent, sin and punishment observe that the earliest extant forms of the tradition,[14]

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10   Cf. *1En* 6-16 and also see, for example, VanderKam, Enochic Motifs 60.

11   On the designation "watchers," see Murray, Origin 303-317; Black, Book 106-107; Mach, Entwicklungsstadien 34, and Bhayro, Shemihazah 20-28.

12   On the angels' various sins, see Reed, Angels 27-37.

13   Another tradition may have circulated that involved the angels descending to earth by God's command to teach humankind positive traits; cf. *Jub*. 4:15. Such a tradition may predate the work or may have been the product of Jubilees in order either to vitiate the idea that angels might conceive of evil plans or intentions while in the heavenly realm (so VanderKam, Enoch Traditions 328-331), or to resolve chronological discrepancies suggested within the extra-biblical tradition altogether (per Segal, Book 125-132).

14   Scholars understand that within the Book of the Watchers alone there may be the vestiges of two or three distinctive traditions concerning angels who descend and misbehave. One stratum incorporated into the Book of the Watchers concerns the inappropriate sexual liaisons of the angels; another concerns angels instructing humankind in forbidden arts. See, for example, Bhayro, Shemihazah 11-39. The combination of the various strata recalls also the complex nature of the Book of the Wat-

other than what one observes in Gen 6:1-4, are likely to be found in the
Book of the Watchers, the first of the five booklets of the anthology to
which we refer today as 1En or the Ethiopic Book of Enoch.[15] The Book
of the Watchers (*1En* 1-36) is thought to have taken its current form by
the third century BCE, though it probably contains traditions that date
to an earlier period.[16] While Genesis does not report any sort of pun-
ishment for the sons of God who descend and unite with women, the
Book of the Watchers, which follows closely the biblical account in
many instances,[17] presents a developed account of God's condemnation
of the angels.

Inasmuch as the Book of the Watchers, like many of the works as-
sociated with the patriarch Enoch as well as apocalyptic literature in
general, addresses both eschatology and theodicy, the punishment of
the angels serves as a warning; just as the disobedient celestial beings
will be judged and punished, so too the humans who sin. Not unex-
pectedly, then, various strata of the Book of the Watchers take up the
punishment of the angels. The earliest manifestations of this tradition
as well as the later accounts which are dependent on these, describe a
type of hell — here a place of punishment or otherworldly prison — for
these angels. From the strata, early and late, we learn that the fate of the
rebellious angels consists of being bound in the earth, in something like
a chasm, and suffering some sort of fiery outcome either prior to or at a
final judgment.

In one of the earliest extant traditions, God responds to the crisis
provoked by the angels by having Raphael, an archangel, bind and cast
into darkness Asael, an angel singled out for teaching humans forbid-
den arts (*1En* 10:4; cf. *1En* 13:1; 14:5). More specifically, Raphael is to
make a pit in the wilderness, according to *1En* 10:4, and there place
Asael.[18] Asael is to be covered with darkness as well as sharp and jag-
ged stones until the day of great judgment. Then he will be led to burn-
ing conflagration (*1En* 10:5-6). The other leader, Shemihazah, and those
angels who followed him in mating with the daughters of men, are to
be bound by the archangel Michael in the valleys of the earth. The im-

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chers which suggests at least five sections. The reader should be mindful that a mix-
ture of sources contributes to this booklet and will, thus, describe variously the pun-
ishment of the angels.

15 See, for example, VanderKam, Enochic Motifs 60-61. While this author holds that Gen
6:1-4 is the older of the two accounts, not all scholars would agree. Cf. Milik, Books
30-33.

16 See, for example, Nickelsburg, Commentary 7; Bhayro, Shemihazah 7-9.

17 See, for example, VanderKam, Interpretation 283-286.

18 The wilderness or desert is referred to as Dudael or Doudael. On this tradition's
origin, see Coblentz Bautch, Study 138-141.

prisonment extends until the day of judgment, when these angels too are led to the fiery abyss (*1En* 10:11-13; cf. 14:5).

Another tradition incorporated into the narrative of the Book of the Watchers presents the angels, specifically those who mingled with women, as immeasurable pillars of heavenly fire confined to a great chasm at the ends of the earth (*1En* 18:10-11; 19:1). A doublet of this tradition is found in *1En* 21:7-10. In this second version, the narration describes a fiery place with a narrow cleft extending to the abyss. The abyss is full of enormous pillars of fire (which are apparently the rebel angels themselves); the reader is told that the place serves as a prison (δεσμωτήριον/ *bēta moqeḥomu*) for the angels, for their eternal confinement (*1En* 21:10). Whether these accounts have in mind temporary prisons prior to the time of final judgment is not entirely clear.[19]

The Animal Apocalypse from the Book of Dreams (*1En* 83-90) as well as the Book of Parables (*1En* 37-71) draw upon the Book of the Watchers and therefore, mirror the punishment of the angels we find in the earlier source. The second century BCE Animal Apocalypse features an archangel binding and then consigning to a dark abyss an angel who somehow affected change among humans (*1En* 88:1; cf. also *1En* 86:1-2). The narrative recalls the distinctive punishment of Asael in *1En* 10. Another archangel gathers the angels guilty of sexual misdeeds; these also are bound and thrown into an abyss of the earth (*1En* 88:3). There they remain until the final judgment, when these angels are thrown into a fiery abyss full of pillars of fire (*1En* 90:24; cf. *1En* 21:7-10).

The first century BCE or CE Book of the Parables[20] presents a hellish prison for the host of Azazel, the angels who led astray those on earth (*1En* 54:5-6). In *1En* 54:1, the place is presented as a deep valley with burning fire, where iron chains have been prepared to bind the rebellious angels. The reference to the prison as a valley could reflect Second Temple traditions regarding the Valley of Hinnom in Jerusalem as a despised place associated with final judgment.[21] Or, it may specifically recall *1En* 27:1 which describes Hinnom as "the cursed valley" where blasphemers will be gathered at the time of judgment. In the Parables, this place is described, according to the Ethiopic, as "the lowest part of

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19   Black (Book of Enoch 219), for example, understands this tradition to refer to the place of final torment.

20   The Book of Parables or the Similitudes of Enoch is the only booklet of *1En* not to have been found at Qumran. A consensus was reached at the 2005 Biennial International Enoch Studies Seminar (Enoch and the Messiah) that the Parables were produced sometime between 100 BCE and 70 CE. See also Sacchi, Camaldoli 510-511.

21   Black (Book 216-217, 219) also relates this site to the valley of Jehoshaphat in Jerusalem where Gentiles were to be assembled and judged (cf. Joel 4:2, 12).

all hell"[22] or as "the abyss of complete judgment"[23] (Eth *maṭḥetta kuellu dayn*) where the angels will be covered with jagged stone; this detail concerning jagged stone and the earlier reference to the host of Azazel recall the angel Asael and his punishment from the Book of the Watchers (cf. *1En* 10:4). Further, on the great day of judgment, archangels will take hold of the rebellious angels and throw them into a burning furnace (*1En* 54:6). As there is a more developed sense of demonology in this later booklet, the Book of the Parables refers to the angels becoming "servants of Satan" (cf. *1En* 54:6).[24]

1En 67:4-5, mostly likely an interpolation from the hypothesized Book of Noah, also describes the prison of the angels as a valley in the West located near to mountains of gold, silver, iron, metal and tin. One learns that the valley is plagued by a sulfur smell from fiery molten metal and troubling waters that contribute to the valley burning beneath the ground. Rivers of fire also flow through the area where the angels who led others astray will be judged (*1En* 67:7).

Such traditions concerning the binding and imprisonment of angels were also known to early Christians. In Jude 6, we learn that the angels who did not keep to their heavenly domain, their proper dwelling (cf. *1En* 15:3, 7), would instead be kept in eternal chains,[25] in gloom for the judgment of the great day. Likewise, 2Pet 2:4 notes that God did not spare the sinful angels but condemned them to the chains of Tartarus and handed them over to be kept for judgment.[26] Both of these New Testament texts seem indebted to Enochic traditions concerning the punishment of angels, as scholars have observed.[27]

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22 See, for example, Black, Book 219, and also Knibb, Book 138.

23 Nickelsburg / VanderKam, 1 Enoch 68.

24 The Book of the Parables speaks of both Satan and satans. The satans accuse humans (*1En* 40:7; cf. Zech 3:1-2), lead astray both the angels and humans (*1En* 54:6; 69:6), and are agents of punishment (*1En* 53:3; 56:1; 62:11; 63:1).

25 Bauckham (Jude 53) argues that in spite of the use of ἀΐδιος, this initial reference is to a temporary imprisonment. Cf. also 2 *En.* 7:2; 18:6.

26 2 Peter is thought to be dependent upon Jude. See Neyrey, 2 Peter 30, 120-122 and Bauckham, Jude 13-14; 141-143. Neyrey (2 Peter 132, 198) suggests that 2Pet 2:4 purposefully uses "Tartarus" for Hades in an appeal to a bicultural (Jewish and Greek) audience.

27 Bauckham (Jude 32, 52-53) calls attention to several parallels between Jude 6 and those traditions in the Book of the Watchers, Animal Apocalypse, and the Book of Parables and states that Jude's dependence on 1En is clear. 2Pet 2:4-9, Bauckham thinks, drew independently on paraenetic traditions comparable to what we observe in Jude and may not have had worked from a text associated with Enoch, though the author would have been familiar with the tradition concerning the fall of the angels. See Jude, 2 Peter 57, 247-249. See also 1Pet 3:19 and Dalton, Christ's Proclamation 163-176.

Other writings from the New Testament are reminiscent of the Enochic tradition of the angels bound in hell. For example, the Book of Revelation presents the punishment of Satan in terms quite close to the punishment of the rebellious angels. Prior to the millennial reign an angel from heaven with the key to the abyss and a large chain seizes Satan and binds him for a thousand years in an abyss (Rev 20:1-3). Though released from the prison and given the opportunity to stir up additional trouble for a brief time, Satan, described as the one who led others astray, is eventually defeated and thrown into the pool of fire and sulfur, a place of endless torment (Rev 20:10).[28] Similarly, Matt 25:41 speaks of the eternal fire prepared for Satan and his angels.

Among the various traditions, one observes that these places of punishment exist to chastise angels or celestial beings. While these traditions may also understand humans to end up in such locales (see, for example, *1En* 67:8-12; Matt 25:41 and Rev 20:15), it is important to note that such sites are under divine control. The rebellious angels, Satan or any other malevolent, supernatural agent are not in charge of such places. As Hans Bietenhard observes, they are presented, rather, as ruling or as having power over, albeit in a limited sense, this world.[29]

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28 Aune (Revelation 1078-1079) notes the similarities between John's Apocalypse and 1En 10:4-6, 11-13. He concludes that both works "are dependent on a traditional eschatological scenario." With the exception of the temporary release of Satan, Aune admits that the texts exhibit striking parallels. The references to the great chain and pool of fire and sulfur (respectively Rev 20:1, 10) recall as well aspects of the tradition that are to be found in the Book of the Parables, mostly likely a work contemporary to the Book of Revelation (cf. 1En 54:4; 67:4-5).

29 Welt 113-116; cf. also Matt 4:8-10; John 12:31; 14:30; *Ascen. Isa.* 2:4; 4:2; *Apoc. Ab.* 22:6. One might think also of the figure Belial (בליעל || "Angel of Darkness" [מלאך חושך]; see 1QS III 20-21 and Davidson, Angels 146-147), well attested among the scrolls of Qumran; according to 1QS I, 16-II, 8 Belial rules the present age and leads astray children of righteousness (cf. 1QS III, 20-25), though he is destined for the pit (cf. 1QM XIII, 10-12). Similarly Mastema (משטמה; "hostility") is presented by Jubilees as the prince of the evil spirits which plague humankind (*Jub.* 10:8; 10:11; 11:5); there Mastema, identified with Satan, pleads for a tenth of the demons not to be bound in punishment but to be allowed to test humankind. Michael Mach (Demons 190) observes that Mastema and Belial appear as functional equivalents within the Dead Sea Scrolls (cf. *Jub.* 15:33 and CD XVI, 3-6). Thus, many Second Temple period works describe such figures which personify or are associated with evil as tormentors of the present era or as having dominion over this world. Moreover, as Bauckham (Fate 78) observes, ancient Jewish literature did not link Satan with the realm of the dead and rarely did Christian literature of the first three centuries. For an example of a later Christian work which did associate Satan (here Beliar) with the realm of the dead (Hades), see *Ques. Bart.* 1:10-20; 3:25.

Eventually these malevolent beings come to be imprisoned themselves in places one might associate with hell.[30]

Though Genesis does not report any sort of punishment for the angels who descend and unite with women[31] — because the flood narrative (Gen 6:5-9:17) occurs immediately following the angels' descent, many apocalyptic texts relate the two incidents, however — there are other instances of treacherous behavior and subsequent punishment of celestial beings in the Hebrew Scriptures. For example, Isa 14:12-21 describes the insurrection of the Day Star, son of the Dawn (הילל בן־שחר) who attempts to set his throne above the stars of God and be like the Most High. As a result, the Day Star is thrown to the netherworld (Sheol), to the recesses of the pit (בור; Isa 14:15). Another example is to be found in Isa 24:22-23. Here the host of the heavens (צבא המרום; Isa 24:21), as well as the kings of the earth, are gathered in a pit (בור) and shut up in a dungeon (מסגר; Isa 24:22). The description of punishments for these celestial beings, in these instances may serve as a precursor for the punishment of the angels;[32] likewise many of the apocalyptic texts that treat the misdeeds of the angels tell also of stars, the hosts of heaven, or planets which are disobedient in some manner and are punished as well (cf. *1En* 18:13-16||21:1-5; Jude 13).

4. Angelic Administrators of the Netherworld and Angels Who Inflict Punishment in the Netherworld

As noted above, the Book of the Watchers is concerned with the eschaton and judgment and therefore the seer, Enoch, is given tours of discrete sites established in the cosmos that serve as post-mortem holding cells for humans and provisional places of punishment for the disobedient angels and stars. The visionary journey also includes those places established for final judgment (*1En* 27:1-4) and for eschatological rewards for the righteous (*1En* 25:5-6; 26:1-2). Many of the sites are pre-

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30   An exception may be Abaddon, a noun derived from the Hebrew root אבד ("to destroy"). The word Abaddon (אבדון), which suggests "place of destruction," occurs several times within wisdom literature of the Hebrew Scriptures and is often in parallelism to Sheol (cf. Prov 15:11) and the grave (קבר; cf. Ps 88:12). Abaddon may also have been personified in a manner comparable to that of Mot, "Death" (see, for example, Prov 27:20; Job 28:22), however, such that certain texts may present it as an angel or demon associated with the realm of the dead. In this respect, see Rev 9:11, where the angel of the abyss is named Abaddon (Ἀβαδδών).

31   See, however, Hendel, Demigods 13-26.

32   Suter (Tradition 94-102) argues, in fact, that the tradition of the angels' punishments as found in 1En 6-11 derives from a midrash of Isa 24:17-23.

sented as inaccessible (cf. *1En* 19:3), though the temporal or spatial remoteness is not a hindrance to Enoch; the seer's travels are facilitated by angels who serve as guides to and seem to govern the extraordinary sites. These angels also play a role in the administration of places that we might think comparable to hell: places of punishment, the realm of the dead (Hades) and the Valley of Hinnom (Gehenna).

Uriel, for example, is presented in *1En* 20:2 as the archangel responsible for the cosmos and Tartarus.[33] The angel appears also in conjunction with Enoch's visit to the place where the rebellious angels will be imprisoned (*1En* 18:11; 19:1 || *1En* 21:7-10); there he clarifies for Enoch the site which the seer observes: a chasm (*1En* 18:11) or abyss (*1En* 21:7) full of pillars of fire. It is also Uriel who escorts the seer to a terrifying place beyond the inhabited world where disobedient stars are held (*1En* 21:1-5; cf. *1En* 18:12-16, though the angel is not explicitly named in the doublet). Uriel also gives Enoch a tour of the Valley of Hinnom (*1En* 27:1-4), here presented as the cursed valley in Jerusalem where those who blasphemed are gathered together for judgment (see also above). Nickelsburg and VanderKam have amended the name of the *angelus interpres* of 1En 27 to Sariel, the archangel of *1En* 20:6 who is said to be in charge of the spirits (+ Eth. "of the sons of men") who sin against the spirit.[34] The idea of Uriel serving as an archangel in charge of the Valley of Hinnom is not really so unusual, however, since Gehenna and Tartarus are both associated with places of punishment for the wicked.[35]

Uriel's name, "light" or "fire of God," calls to mind the solar nature of Šamaš, the Babylonian sun-god.[36] Both Šamaš and Uriel play a role in judgment. Šamaš in his nightly journey through the nether region judges the deceased. Perhaps in a comparable manner, Uriel is associated with Tartarus where judgment and punishment are conferred especially upon sinful celestial beings. Though Uriel is not a deity who judges ultimately, the archangel is instrumental in carrying out God's orders vis-à-vis the cosmos and in facilitating judgment or retribution. The traditional connection between Uriel and a sort of hell is recalled in

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33 Some of the Ethiopic manuscripts of *1En* 20:2 suggest that Uriel is responsible, instead, for thunder and tremors (cf., however, Eth BM 485; Berl, Tana 9). In light of other references to Uriel in 1En and the Sibylline Oracles, the Greek appears to offer the superior reading. So Charles, Book 43, and VanderKam, Enoch: A Man 52. Knibb (Book 107) and Black (Book 162) prefer the Ethiopic or find the Greek reading implausible. In adjudicating between the readings, one should also attempt to anticipate the Semitic original on which these would be based.

34 Cf. 1En 46. Also, Nickelsburg, Commentary 319.

35 So Milik, Books 173.

36 Cf. Albani, Astronomie 306-310.

Sib. Or. 2.229 which also features the archangel breaking down the gates of Hades.[37]

Though not exactly a hell, the Book of the Watchers also features a realm of the dead that appears governed by an archangel. Just as *1En* 20:6 reports that Raphael is in charge of the spirits of men, it is that archangel who leads the seer on a tour of the resting place for the deceased in the Book of the Watchers.[38] This realm of the dead appears in the Book of the Watchers as a mountain to the west, and within the mountain are hollow compartments that contain the souls of the dead (*1En* 22:1-2).[39] The souls of the deceased are divided into four groups, with each group having its own sort of compartment. Three of the compartments are dark, holding cells for the souls of various classes of sinners. The fourth compartment is illumined and contains a fountain of water. It is reserved, of course, for the righteous. The hollow places house the souls until the day of judgment.

The name of this archangel, Raphael, who is associated in the Book of the Watchers with the realm of the dead, connotes— perhaps surprisingly—"healing" as is borne out by *1En* 40:9 and Tob 3:17, 12:12-3. These two dimensions of Raphael, as healer and as an angel associated with death, may be reconciled, however in the following manner. This archangel is associated ultimately with the chthonic realm, which itself manifests the integral bond between death and fecundity.[40]

The Book of the Watchers does not offer much elaboration on the way in which angels like Uriel and Raphael oversee these otherworldly realms associated with death and punishment. *1En* 20 states only that the archangels are in charge of these realms or over certain tasks; many of the subsequent tours feature the archangels explaining to Enoch the nature of each place with which they have some association. The Book of the Watchers is concerned especially with asserting the existence of such otherworldly realms that offer reward or retribution as a means for assuring the pious of the justness of God and of the reality of post-

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37 Cf. also *Apoc. Pet.* 4 where the reader learns that Uriel has been appointed over the resurrection of the dead on the day of judgment and at the command of God is to return soul and spirit. Uriel appears also to escort sinners to punishment (*Apoc. Pet.* 6). See also Bauckham, Fate 221-222.

38 Similarly, one finds an angel in charge of the realm of the dead. Cf. *Ascen. Isa.* 9:16, 10:8, 11:20. It is clear that this angel is not Satan, as Bauckham (Fate 77) also asserts, who is portrayed in the work as located in the firmament and as ruler or prince of this world (*Ascen. Isa.* 1:3; 7:9, 10:29; 11:23).

39 For a very thorough study of *1En* 22 and its presentation of the realm of the dead in light of other such depictions from ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia and the Mediterranean environs, see Wacker, Weltordnung.

40 See Astour, Hellenosemitica 234, 236. As Astour explains, the dead become natural givers of the harvest and those with power to take life, are also in a position to give it.

mortem punishments and blessings and does not linger over the details as to how the angels participate in administering the various realms.[41]

Angels do mete out divine punishment even within the Hebrew Scriptures (cf., for example, Ezek 9:1-11), and would seem to continue in this capacity in other texts of the Second Temple period. Among the Dead Sea Scrolls, a class of heavenly being, "the angels of hostilities" (מלאכי המשטמות) or "angels of destruction" (מלאכי חבל), emerges. God delivers those with whom he is displeased over to these angels of destruction who then are permitted to rule over such people (4Q387a [4QJer Cᵇ / *olim* 4QpsMosesᵇ] 2 I, 4; 4Q390 [4QapocrJer E / 4QpsMosesᵉ] 1 I, 11; 2 I, 7). These angels may be associated in some way with Mastema (משטמה; "hostility"; see 1QM XIII, 12 and also above), who emerges in the scrolls as a leader of the demons (cf. *Jub.* 10:8, 11). *T. Levi* 3:2-3 knows as well of angels who occupy the lowest of three heavens and have been dispatched to punish humankind. In the Book of Parables, angels of punishment prepare instruments of Satan to be used against the kings and the mighty (*1En* 53:3) and chains of iron and bronze to be used against the offspring of the rebellious angels (*1En* 56:1-3); the reader learns as well that humans subject to torment by the angels will beg God for reprieve (*1En* 63:1). Thus, angels of hostility seem to do God's bidding and exact punishment in a manner consonant with the divine plan (see also *Jub.* 49:2), even while they may be associated with Mastema or Belial (cf. 1QM XIII, 10-12) and in that regard, appear malefactors.[42]

While Second Temple period texts, like those associated with Enoch, do not take up at great length the post-mortem punishment of sinners, later apocalyptic works, both Jewish and Christians, develop the topic substantially.[43] The punishment of sinners is addressed in the

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41 An exception may be noted in the initial references to the punishment of Asael, Shemihazah and those angels who descended to mate with women at the hands of the archangels (*1En* 10:4, 11-13). See above and Davidson, Angels 302.

42 Davidson (Angels 157-158) does not seem inclined to associate the angels of destruction which carry out God's punishments with those linked to Belial in the Rule of the Community, the War Scroll and the Damascus Document in light of how he understands the angels of destruction to function in the Two Spirits Discourse: as obedient servants to God. He sees as objectionable agents of Belial serving also as agents of God. But Davidson (Angels 155-159, n. 4) also acknowledges that in the Parables, the angels of punishment and even Satan execute punishment on evildoers precisely as subjects of God. See also CD VIII, 2 and *Jub.* 49:2. Belial and his minions are, however, themselves subject to judgment and God's wrath ultimately (cf., for example, 1QM I, 4-6; 14-15; III, 9; 1QH III, 19-36; 11QMelch II, 13); so also Davidson, Angels, 303.

43 There is likely a relationship, however, between works like the Book of the Watchers and these later "tours of hell." Martha Himmelfarb understands the Book of the Watchers as the point to begin a history of the tours of hell, since the former employs man-

so-called "tours of hell,"[44] where typically a pseudonymous hero of the faith is taken to infernal realms to learn the fate of sinners. In these late antique works, the post-mortem state is one of unambiguous and immediate retribution or reward, and thus, the infernal realm appears as the hell full of particular torments and agonies.[45] In these pseudepigraphical and apocryphal writings, angels typically deliver punishments that fit the nature of the sin. These "measure for measure" punishments, in the words of Martha Himmelfarb,[46] are most graphically described; for example, those whose sins involve speech, such as slander, gossip or blasphemy, are hung by their tongues (cf. Eth. *Apoc. Pet.* 7:2). In such depictions, the angels, sometimes referred to generically as "angels of punishment" (cf. Eth. *Apoc. Pet.* 7) and at other times named,[47] are presented as terrifying in appearance and pitiless (cf. *2En* 10:1-5 [J]; *Apoc. Zeph.* 4, 6; *Apoc. Paul* 11).[48] Himmelfarb remarks that these angels of the late antique tours of hell seem perversely enthralled by their tasks that exact suffering; in that respect, the angels seem finally more infernal than heavenly in their pursuits.[49]

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ners of expression (the demonstrative explanations) and concerns the fate of the dead also important to the latter. She observes: "The tours of hell represent one stream in the development of tour apocalypses in the centuries after the Book of the Watchers." Tours 169; cf. 50-56. Bauckham (Fate 35,60) also sees the tours of hell to be in continuity with Jewish apocalypses. Bauckham (Fate 34-35) suggests that the oldest extant tour of hell may be within the Latin fragments of the Apocalypse of Elijah, a Jewish work that dates to no later than the first century CE.

44   For a comprehensive examination of such traditions, see Himmelfarb, Tours.

45   Bauckham (Fate 34, 52, 70) observes that the notion that the punishment of the wicked could begin immediately following death (and not be postponed until the final judgment) contributed greatly to the tradition of the tours of hell. In earlier Second Temple literature, both the righteous and the sinner awaited final judgment and reward or retribution in a type of realm of the dead like Hades (cf. *1En* 22); thus the reader is only able to anticipate, through the seer's descriptions, places of judgment. The later tours of hell allow the seer to describe to the reader in vivid detail, however, ongoing punishments inflicted. On the representations of such hells and how they compare to descriptions of Sheol, Gehenna, and Hades, see Himmelfarb, Tours 106-116.

46   Himmelfarb, Tours 75-92.

47   Ezrael, for example, is identified in the Eth. Apocalypse of Peter as the "angel of wrath" who plays an active role in the punishments of various classes of sinners (cf. *Apoc. Pet.* 9-12). See also Bauckham, Fate 222-223, who is inclined to amend the name to Sariel, an angel featured in *1En* 20:6 (see above). In Gedulat Moshe, Moses' guide, the chief of Gehenna, is an angel named Nesargiel (*Ged. Mosh.* 13-14).

48   In the Apocalypse of Zephaniah, the seer encounters Satan ("the accuser"); it is clear that in this context, however, Satan serves in his traditional role as juridical accuser or adversary to humankind (see Job 1; Zechariah 3), as he accuses the people before God (cf. *Apoc. Zeph.* 6:17; 8:5). So Bauckham, Fate 37. Himmelfarb provides a survey of works that feature such "angels of torture." See Tours, 116; 120-121.

49   See Himmelfarb, Tours 120-121. Bauckham (Fate 225-226) softens the representations of such angels as agents of punishment, however, by noting that their description as

5. Conclusion

Though it may be uncommon to associate angels with hell in modern times, the religious imagination of Second Temple and late antique Jews and Christians could readily observe heavenly beings within the infernal realm or hell. Among the earliest of Second Temple period works are traditions concerning disobedient angels who were imprisoned in types of hell. Though the angels were thought, like Satan, Belial or Mastema, to corrupt and lead humans astray, they were not considered rulers of the netherworld. Far from ruling over such environs, those angels who have rebelled against God eventually become the inhabitants of infernal, Tartarus-like environs. As God is ultimately in control of even the most remote realms (both in temporal and spatial senses), even places associated with the afterlife or netherworld are under his jurisdiction. Thus, loyal angels, representatives of heaven, govern infernal realms or places of punishment on the Divine's behalf. In earlier works of the Second Temple period (in the Book of the Watchers, for example), the relationship between angels and sites of punishment or the realm of the dead is not clarified. Within the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Book of the Parables, however, angels of hostility or angels who torment (again, under God's directive) are more prominent. It is within late antique works especially that one finds extensive traditions concerning hell that feature fierce angels carrying out specific punishments tailored to various sins. Thus, from the Second Temple period to Late Antiquity we see a decline in interest in the punishment of the angels in places of detention,[50] and instead a growing emphasis on the human inhabitants and their punishments at the hands of angels in hell.

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merciless and horrifying is fundamentally related to their task of carrying out divine justice with rigor; these angels are righteous, he maintains, not evil. Himmelfarb distinguishes between the angels of the Hebrew Bible who punish humankind at the Divine's command and the angels of these later tours of hell. She describes the latter as a new class of angel not attested in the Bible, influenced perhaps by Greek traditions concerning the Furies (Tours 121). See also Dieterich, Nekyia 54-62.

50   A shift in emphases may be reflected at Qumran as well where sectarian texts manifest considerable interest in the punishment of Belial and his forces in an eschatological war more so than in the tradition associated with the punishment of the fallen angels prominent in the Enochic literature. Davidson, Angels 298, 321.

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